Daily Report
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LD251321 [Editorial Report]

Gulf Conflict

Gulf Shipping—A Liberian-registered, Saudi-owned tanker was attacked by speedboats in the Strait of Hormuz 24 April, Tehran radio reported citing REUTER.

According to AFP, there were no casualties in the Iranian attack on the oil tanker. The attack followed the U.S. announcement that the Navy will provide protection to any merchant ships, except for Iraqi or Iranian vessels, attacked in the Gulf.

Reporting the U.S. announcement, Tehran radio said Iran considered the policy a "conspiracy" to provide security to Iraq's supporters and vowed that Iran will confront it "with severity."

Meanwhile, the JORDAN TIMES declared the United States bears "direct responsibility" for protecting the Gulf states from the aftermath of its retaliatory attacks on Iran.

In the wake of the U.S.-Iranian clash in the Gulf, Tehran radio reported that an IRGC Naval Unit found pieces of the U.S. Cobra helicopter downed in the incident. Iranian Air Force planes patrolling the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman 23 April ignored a "provocative warning" from a foreign ship, according to a military communique cited by IRNA. The agency earlier reported that U.S. warplanes were "repelled" over Sirri and Abu Musa Islands 21 April.

In another development connected with the U.S.-Iranian clashes, Lebanon's "Revolutionary Justice Organization" threatened to kill U.S. hostages Edward Tracy and Joseph Ciccipio if the United States engages in "any new aggression" in the Gulf, AFP reported 24 April.

In their statement, delivered to a "Western news agency" along with a photocopy of Tracy's ID card, the group also threatened to "take the fight to America itself."

Iran-Iraq Fighting—Iran's Air Force "heavily" bombed Iraqi positions in Mehran and Al-Faw operations regions 24 April, IRNA reported citing an Iranian military communique.

An Iraqi military spokesman denied Iranian claims Iraq shelled Abadan 22 and 23 April, WAKH reported. Iraqi allegations that Iran shelled Darband-i Khan and Al-Sulaymaniyah and launched missiles at Al-Qurnah were dismissed by a WIH spokesman who claimed the allegations are a pretext to resume the war of the cities, IRNA reported.

However, an Iraqi military spokesman cited by INA said "a number" of civilians were killed in artillery attacks on Al-Sulaymaniyah and Darband-i Khan.

Concerning the use of chemical weapons, Iran accused Iraq of chemically bombing two villages in Khuzestan Province, injuring 98 people as well as 9 IRGC chemical defense unit members who were decontaminating the area, IRNA reported. Iraq also chemically bombed two villages near Ahvaz, the agency added.

Syrian-Iranian Talks

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' met with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in Damascus 23 and 24 April, Damascus radio reported. According to Tehran radio, Velayati gave Al-Asad a message from Iranian President 'Ali Khamene'i.

'Arafat in Damascus

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Damascus 24 April and visited the cemetery in the Al-Yarmuk refugee camp where the late Khalil al-Wazir was buried, Damascus television reported.

Syrian officials who received 'Arafat at Damascus airport included Sa'id Hammadi, the Ba'th Party Regional Command member who delivered Syria's speech at Al-Wazir's funeral.

A related Radio Monte Carlo report noted that 'Arafat received an enthusiastic welcome from Al-Yarmuk residents, who raised his car shoulder high. The PLO leader told the radio that he hopes to meet with President al-Asad and said he is returning to "dear brothers and comrades-in-arms."

On the political implications of 'Arafat's visit to Damascus, Radio Monte Carlo cited DFLP leader Nayif Hawatimah's view that conditions are now favorable for "normalizing" relations between Syria and the PLO.

The main outstanding issue dividing Syria and Fatah is that of relations with Egypt, he said, adding that the question of Palestinian presence in Lebanon is no longer a contentious issue.

However, Kuwait's AL-SIYASAH reported that Syria also opposes PLO contacts with Jewish personalities and wants the PLO to adopt a firmer line on UN Resolution 242, KUNA noted.

Syria's position in this regard was expressed by Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam in a recent meeting with PLO officials. Nevertheless, Palestinian sources cited by the JORDAN TIMES said Syria is adopting a "new flexible approach" toward reconciliation and is ready to discuss differences without preconditions.

The paper added that PLO Political Department chief Faruq Qaddumi has resumed work in Damascus, while the DFLP has also reopened its Damascus offices.

In another development, a 23 April Damascus radio commentary stressed the need for Arabs to respond to the "hostile" U.S. posture by closing ranks "on a platform of rejecting American trusteeship and Israeli hegemony."

The commentary was responding to the recent U.S.-Israeli memorandum of understanding, which it viewed as evidence that U.S. claims of neutrality in the Mideast conflict are "hollow" and U.S. peace proposals "empty."

Lebanon

Tripoli Explosion—A car bomb exploded at a market in Tripoli 23 April, Voice of Lebanon radio reported. According to Beirut radio, 65 people were killed and 125 wounded in the "massacre."

Accusing the Lebanese Forces of committing the attack, the Northern Coordination Committee called on the population to strike on 25 April, Beirut radio added.

Meanwhile, the Khalil 'Akkawi Unit of the 9 February Organization accused Syrian intelligence services of rigging the car bomb, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon said.

Israeli Raid—Israeli Air Force planes raided "terrorist" headquarters and weapons and ammunition dumps in the Al-Damur area north of Sidon 22 April, Jerusalem radio reported.

According to Voice of Lebanon radio, one person was killed and seven were injured in the Israeli raid against PFLP-GC positions. In another development, the Israeli Air Force commander warned that Hizballah forces in Al-Biqa' may obtain U.S. Stinger missiles, thus harming the Air Force's "freedom of action" in Lebanon, Jerusalem television reported.

Hizballah-Amal Strife—Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, a member of Iran's Council of Guardians, proposed the formation of a 5-man committee to investigate recent clashes between Hizballah and the Amal Movement, IRNA reported.

The committee would be composed of Shi'ite theologians Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah and Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din; Amal and Hizballah leaders; and Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam, IRNA added.

Amal leader Nabih Birri stated that although Jannati did not present his proposal to the Amal delegation upon his arrival in Beirut, Amal is now studying the proposal.

Israel

Occupied Territories—Four Arabs were killed in clashes with security forces 22-23 April, Jerusalem radio reported. Two of the fatalities occurred near Hebron, one in Qabatiyah, and another in the Gaza Strip.

The radio noted that 13 other people were injured when soldiers fired at rioters in a Gaza refugee camp, while an Israeli woman was injured when a large rock was thrown at her car on the 'Arad highway.

Police also dispersed a "mass riot" on the Temple Mount 22 April, arresting 30 people, the radio said. The riot in Jerusalem followed Friday prayers commemorating Khalil al-Wazir.

Despite these incidents, the military authorities ended their closure of the territories over the weekend, allowing residents to leave for Israel 24 April. The radio reported a "rush of employees" into Israel that day, noting that the security situation was "relatively quiet" and that all curfews on Gaza refugee camps were lifted the following morning.

Relations With USSR—The Foreign Ministry referred to "growing flexibility" in the Soviet stand toward Israel, Jerusalem radio reported, noting that this was in response to Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's disclosure the USSR will establish diplomatic relations with Israel when the latter accepts the idea of an international conference.

However, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir maintained that the USSR continues its policy of "disregarding" Israel, the radio added. Nevertheless, experts in Shamir's office have drafted a report which predicts the USSR may make a direct appeal to Israel during Shevardnadze's upcoming visit to the region, according to Jerusalem television.

The report refers to a process of rapprochement between Israel and the Soviet Union and does not rule out the possibility Shevardnadze may visit Israel.

Aftermath of Hijack

An Algerian Foreign Ministry spokesman cited by Algiers radio reacted sharply to British criticism of the deal which ended the hijacking of the Kuwaiti Boeing 747, asserting that this "strange attitude" is at odds with worldwide "satisfaction" and calls for "astonishment."

Algeria "cannot accept from anyone" such criticism of its action, which was aimed at saving human lives, the statement added. Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti amir expressed his country's "full gratitude" for Algeria's role in freeing the crew and passengers of the hijacked plane, KUNA noted.

Kuwait's defense minister said his country will introduce measures to prevent further hijackings, the agency disclosed.

In response to allegations of Iranian involvement in the hijack, Iran's IRNA quoted the airliner's pilot as saying no one joined the hijackers while the aircraft was at Mashhad Airport. The two female hostages from the Kuwaiti Al-Sabah family issued an identical statement, IRNA added.

Jordan

The Government of Jordan signed a contract to buy 20 French "Mirage-2000" aircraft, Paris radio reported 23 April.

Afghanistan

"Hundreds" of Soviet troops were evacuated by helicopter from two districts in Qandahar and Zabol Provinces 22 and 23 April, AFP reported, adding that the two districts are now under "complete rebel control."

Mujahidin also took control of the Army's 55th Brigade headquarters after some 800 Afghan troops and 12 Soviet advisers were evacuated from the garrison in Konarha Province 22 April, according to AFP.

Concerning implementation of the Geneva agreement, Helsinki radio reported that the UN secretary general appointed a Finnish general head of the UN observer group for Afghanistan. The Finnish Government also agreed to provide nine military observers, the radio added.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Spokesman Cited on Israeli Raids

JN221636 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] A Palestinian spokesman said in Damascus today that today's bombings of Palestinian positions demonstrate the deep impasse in which the Israeli authorities are finding themselves as a result of the escalating popular uprising.

He added that these bombings also show Israel's concern about the swift recovery and the rebuilding of the bridges of the militant alliance between Syria and the PLO after Damascus has opened its arms to martyr Abu Jihad and the PLO leadership.

PFLP-GC Positions Raided

JN231536 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1515 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] A responsible source in the PFLP-GC has stated the following:

Zionist enemy Air Force planes raided our positions in Al-Damur and Al-Na'imah in Lebanon at 1610 yesterday. The raid, in which three squadrons supported by helicopters participated, lasted 45 minutes. Our air defenses confronted the raiding planes.

Four of our people sustained light wounds. They received first aid treatment and left the hospital. Material losses were slight.

PLO Envoy Explains View of Moscow Stance

PM221149 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Apr 88 p 4

[Zaki Musa report: "Palestinian Official to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Moscow Committed to PLO Participation in International Conference"]

[Excerpt] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—A Palestinian leader has announced that the Soviet Union's commitment to the PLO, to the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, and also to PLO participation on an equal basis in the international conference was emphasized by Moscow during PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's recent Moscow talks. It was also emphasized in Soviet statements and official media comments on the talks.

Contacted on the telephone by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Nabil 'Amr, director of the PLO office in Moscow, said the Soviet Foreign Ministry yesterday issued a clarification urging the press not to deal with one part of the Soviet stand and ignore another.

It said the solution the Soviets are talking about must guarantee the rights and interests of the Palestinians just as it guarantees Israel's interests.

'Amr added that the CPSU Politburo, the highest authority for decisionmakers in the Soviet Union to turn to, the day before yesterday discussed the talks held and positive results reached during 'Arafat's visit.

He said on this occasion the Party Politburo issued a statement urging that the convening of an international conference should be expedited to resolve the Middle East problem in a manner guaranteeing the rights of all parties, including the national rights of the Palestinian people.

The PLO office director, who participated in most of the talks held and contacts made by the Palestinian delegation in Moscow, said:

"The Soviets are using flexible language and making a thorough study of the details. They are also eager to eliminate any excuses which might be used by a party feeling any sensitivity toward Soviet participation in finding a solution to the Middle East problem."

He added: There is a Soviet determination to actually participate in securing a solution. That is why the Soviets are conducting dialogues and making contacts with all the parties to match up to the Soviet Union's status as a superpower. This determination increased after the evident failure inflicted on U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, which, in the Soviets' opinion, resulted from the U.S. secretary's disregard of the new facts created by the uprising, which all relate to the PLO and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

He denied that TASS could have published the story that the Soviet leadership had asked the PLO to recognize Israel. What was published is exactly as follows:

"The Palestinian people's national interests must be as important as Israeli interests." And this is an old Soviet stand. The new element is that this has been expressed in a clearer and more objective way than before. [passage omitted]

DFLP Delegation Confers With Soviet Envoy

JN221244 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] A DFLP spokesman in Damascus has stated that a DFLP Political Bureau delegation led by Secretary General Nayif Hawatimah has met with the Soviet ambassador in Damascus. The talks dealt with the latest developments of the uprising and ways of backing and promoting it.

Talks also dealt with Syrian-Palestinian relations and the steps being undertaken to establish these relations on solid grounds.

PLO Mediator on Hijackers' Original Plans

AU221104 Rome ANSA in English 1019 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] (ANSA) Rome, April 22—Malaz Abdou [name as received], a Palestinian mediator that took part in negotiations with the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner while it was parked at the Larnaca airport, told an Italian daily in an interview published here today that the original plans of the hijackers were thwarted by an accord forged telephonically by the amir of Kuwait and Syrian President Hafiz Al-Asad.

Malaz Abdou told the "PAESE SERA" newspaper that the hijackers originally planned to fly to Beirut where their hostages would be made to disappear into the labyrinth of Lebanon's terrorist hideouts. Before making their getaway they planned to blow up the plane on the tarmac at Beirut's airport. However, Al-Asad in accord with the amir, would not allow the Kuwaiti airliner to land.

Seeing their plans overturned, the hijackers found themselves in some ways hostage, Malaz Abdou claimed. At Larnaca they began to look for a way out and decided Algeria was their best bet, the Palestinian recounted.

He confirmed the fact that additional commandoes boarded the plane while it stopped off in Mashhad in Iran. On that occasion, he said, it was decided to free all Western passengers so as to concentrate the attack on Kuwait without risking external intervention that might abort the entire operation.

PLO Representative Condemns Red Brigades Murder

AU221052 Rome ANSA in English 1013 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] (ANSA) Rome, April 22—The head of the Rome office of the Palestine Liberation Organization has condemned both the Red Brigades and the leaflet they released Thursday claiming responsibility for the assassination of Christian Democrat Senator Roberto Ruffilli.

PLO representative Nimr Hammad told ANSA here that his organization condemns any form of terrorism, either by states or by groups, and that this applied to the terrorists who assassinated Abu Jihad and Ruffilli.

Both men were killed on April 16, Jihad in Tunis by Israeli commandoes and Ruffilli in the northeastern Italian city of Forli by the Red Brigades.

Hammad said the PLO's struggle was a just one, a struggle for national liberation. "We are victims of terrorism", he said. The fact that the Red Brigades mentioned the Palestinian people in their Thursday communique only works to the benefit of the terrorism perpetrated by the State of Israel, the PLO representative asserted.

Algeria

President Receives PLO's 'Arafat, Khalaf

LD231744 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Brother Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, was received by Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid today.

During this meeting which was also attended by Brother Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf], member of the Fatah Central Committee, the two sides discussed recent developments in Palestine and Arab-Palestinian relations.

An official source said Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid has presented his condolences to Brother Abu 'Ammar and expressed his and the Algerian people's pain and distress at the loss of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. At the same time he stressed Algeria would support the Palestinian people and revolution with all its power until the Palestinian people achieve all of their legitimate national rights under the leadership of their sole legitimate representative, the PLO.

'Arafat Hails Support

LD231909 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] President Chadli Bendjedid has received PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. The talks were held in the presence of Mr Mohamed Cherif Messaadia and PLO Central Committee member Abu Iyad. Following this meeting, Mr 'Arafat made the following statement to the press:

[Begin recording] I have conveyed [words indistinct] and the gratitude of the Palestinian people for this brotherly commitment by Algeria, its president, government, party, and people, particularly in the wake of the sad event of the martyrdom [words indistinct].

This stand expressed by Algeria [words indistinct]. Then, talks shifted to the Arab summit and the importance of convening the meeting at the highest levels so it may issue clear and important resolutions for the support and intensification of our people's blessed uprising in the occupied territories. This uprising was fanned and consolidated by the blood of martyr Abu Jihad.

The talks also addressed several issues and developments occurring in the region, such as the so-called initiatives of the envoys who are trying to impose a new slavery on our people, and the solid stand by our people which is part of the continuous revolution and uprising which will be carried on with every means until the Israelis withdraw from our land and our independent state, with Jerusalem as its capital, is created, God willing. [end recording]

Messaadia Receives 'Arafat

LD231258 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Today at FLN headquarters Mohamed Cherif Messaadia, member of the Political Bureau and head of the Permanent Secretariat of the FLN Central Committee, received Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman, who was accompanied by Abu Iyad, member of Fatah Movement Central Committee.

After reviewing developments in the occupied territories and the revolutionary uprising dominating events there, they discussed a number of issues related to the latest developments in the Arab arena.

The meeting was attended by Sadek Zouaten, member of the Permanent Secretariat in charge of the Council of Friendship and Solidarity with the Peoples, and Abu al-'Izz, PLO representative in Algeria.

Reportage on Reaction to Hijack Outcome

British Envoy Summoned

LD221936 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] The British ambassador in Algiers was summoned this afternoon to the Foreign Ministry following a number of British reactions to the peaceful outcome of the diverted Kuwaiti airliner.

UK Criticism Viewed

LD242009 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Following comments reported by the news media quoting official sources in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, a spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made the following statement:

The happy and peaceful ending of the hijacking of the Kuwaiti airliner brought about by Algeria after intensive and sincere efforts has been saluted worldwide as a worthy effort which saved innocent lives and settled an extremely delicate situation.

The highest political authorities in the State of Kuwait asked the Algerian authorities to participate in this settlement. But some have given themselves the right to exploit the conditions in which the solution was obtained to launch an anti-Algerian campaign, pretending to ignore the difficulty of this humanitarian intercession.

This strange attitude, which is at odds with the general satisfaction expressed worldwide, in particular by the Kuwaiti Government, calls for astonishment and arouses serious questions over its real motives.

The nature of the confrontation between the international community and the phenomenon of violence remains dependent, more than ever, on a harmonious combination of the efforts of nations, not only to repress the manifestations of violence, but also to prevent them from occurring and eliminate their underlying causes.

To undertake such collective action to elevate man and return consideration to him, governments must rise to the level of sincere and effective solidarity, which is above verbal oneupmanship and easy excuses.

As far as it is concerned, Algeria cannot but express its satisfaction that its humanitarian intervention has contributed to the peaceful settlement of grave international disputes, and, in many cases, has prevented bloodshed.

On the other hand, as an independent member of the international community, Algeria cannot accept from anyone, in dealing with whoever it might be, that others have the right to criticize an action the result of which has been to save human lives from the cycle of deadly violence nor can it remain with its hands tied in the face of an unfriendly act, whatever it may be.

Kuwait Expresses Thanks

LD241248 Algiers APS in English 1014 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, 24/4/88 (APS)—In a message addressed Saturday evening to the Kuwaiti people, the Amir of Kuwait highly thanked Algeria for having accepted the landing of the plane in Algeria and for having released the crew and the passengers". [quotation mark as received]

The Amir of Kuwait also thanked PLO for its contribution to the solution of this problem and all the countries of the Cooperation Council and all the Arab and Muslim countries for the sympathy they expressed to Kuwait during this difficult conjuncture.

After having recalled the just struggle of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, the Amir of Kuwait expressed his deep affliction following the assassination of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] and renewed its support to the Palestinian resistance.

Saudi King's 'Congratulations'

LD230913 Algiers APS in Arabic 0800 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Algiers, 23 Apr (APS)—The day before yesterday, Thursday, Mr Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Republic and FLN secretary general, received a telephone call from King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques.

The king expressed his congratulations to President Chadli Bendjedid for the good offices exerted by Algeria which allowed a happy and peaceful ending to the hijacking of the aircraft.

Turkey's Evren Sends Message

TA201950 Ankara Domestic Service in Turkish 1800 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] President Kenan Evren has said that Kuwait's determined attitude, refusing to concede to the terrorists' demands, has played a significant role in the release of the passengers on the Kuwaiti airliner.

Evren has sent messages to Kuwaiti Amir Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah and Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid.

In his message to the Kuwaiti amir, Evren expressed his pleasure over the release of the last hostages on the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner. Evren said: There is no doubt Kuwait's determined attitude, under your intelligent leadership, refusing to concede to the terrorists' demands, constitutes the main factor in the conclusion of this regrettable incident without further loss of life.

I applaud the result achieved by Kuwait through this attitude and hope this will serve as an example to other countries that may face similar blackmail by terrorists in the future.

In a message to the Algerian president, Evren noted: The valuable efforts exerted by the Algerian authorities under your intelligent leadership have no doubt played a great role in concluding the incident without causing further loss of life.

These efforts prevented bloody and regrettable incidents from occurring at Boumedienne Airport, where happy welcoming and farewell ceremonies were held some time ago for Turkey and Algeria.

Commentary Attacks U.S.-Israeli Agreement

LD231230 Algiers APS in Arabic 0930 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Algiers, 23 Apr (APS)—AL-SHA'B continues to fight with the pen and to stand by the uprising in the occupied territories and it lives with the sufferings of the Palestinians and their tragedy. It has allocated 90 percent of its news to the uprising and the Palestinian issue.

In its commentary today, AL-SHA'B asks how long the boundless arrogance of the aggressive U.S.-Israeli alliance will continue against the peoples of the Islamic and Arab nations, with the Palestinian people at their head.

In previous times, the United States used not to publicize its alliance with Israel, in spite of giving it all the military, political, and financial means to continue its aggression against the peoples of the region.

However, since a time not long ago, the United States has not hidden this alliance, which has materialized and become public in the strategic cooperation treaties in all political, military, security, and economic fields.

The proof of this, the newspaper adds, is the recent agreement signed between the United States and Israel for strategic cooperation, according to which Israel shoulders the burden of Article 1105 of the 1987 U.S. Defense Law.

AL-SHA'B has stressed that this agreement represents a new phase in the aggressive war launched by the U.S.-Israeli strategic alliance in various forms against the peoples of the region "and that that agreement materializes, consecrates, and legalizes the U.S. commitment to protect the Israeli aggression and to make it a part of the iron fist policy practiced by the United States against the peoples of the region. The situation in the region has deteriorated to an extent which has made the U.S. beast bare its fangs".

Chad

Goukouni Reshuffles GUNT Government 20 Apr

AB2304191888 (Clandestine) Bardai Chadian National Radio in French 1831 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Comrade militants of liberation, valiant soldiers, cadres, and commandos of the National Liberation Army, here is the important decree on the reshuffle of the GUNT.

The GUNT reshuffle: The president of the GUNT and head of state, in view of the Lagos Accord of 21 August 1979 on national reconciliation, particularly the consensus on the appointment of a president and a vice president, and in view of the protocol agreement signed on 19 March 1988 in Tripoli between the major factions which signed the Lagos Accord, decrees:

The following have been appointed members of the GUNT of Chad:
1. President and head of state, Goukouni Oueddei;
2. Vice president, Najita Bia Somal;
3. Minister of external relations and cooperation, Mahamat Abba Sa'id;
4. Minister of national defense, security, and health, Rakhis Manani;
5. Minister of finance, civil service, and labor, Najita Bia Somal;
6. Minister of information, youth, and scholarships, 'Isa Mousa Bakwe;
7. Minister of justice, refugees, and social affairs, Ahmat Rakhis;
8. Secretary general of the government, Ahmat Boutrak.

The present decree, which abrogates all former and contrary arrangements, is valid as of the date of its signature and will be recorded and published wherever necessary.

Signed in Tripoli on 20 April 1988;

Goukouni Oueddei.

Acheikh ibn Oumar Denies Joining Goukouni

AB2404110888 Paris AFP in French 1005 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Paris, 24 Apr (AFP) — Acheikh ibn Oumar, leader of one of the military factions of the Chadian opposition who is now living in Tripoli, has denied having joined a coalition of the Chadian opposition movements formed under Goukouni Oueddei's leadership, according to a communique from his faction published in Paris today.

Mr Acheikh, chairman of the Revolutionary Democratic Council (CDR), is "neither directly nor indirectly" associated with "this deceitful operation that can only deepen the division of the forces opposed to the Ndjamena regime," the communique says.

The Libyan official news agency, JANA, announced 1 month ago the formation in Tripoli of a coalition of five Chadian movements, including the CDR, under Mr Goukouni, who had just come back after an unsuccessful attempt to achieve reconciliation with Chadian President Hissein Habre.

Shortly after this, the CDR announced the removal of its deputy chairman, Major Nadjita Beassoumal, who it blamed for having endorsed the Tripoli meeting. In his communique, which bore a Tripoli dateline, Mr Acheikh also reaffirmed "the urgent need to hold a democratic debate among Chadians aimed at a solid and lasting grouping of all Chadian forces around a clear-cut program with a view to (?creating) conditions for a lasting peace."

Egypt

Mubarak Speaks on Sinai Liberation Anniversary

NC251035 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Address to the nation by President Muhammad Husni Mubarak on the 6th anniversary of the liberation of Sinai on 25 April; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Brother compatriots: It pleases me to speak to you on this immortal day in our national history; a day that marks the anniversary of the complete liberation of Sinai.

This is an anniversary for all Egyptians, who once felt pain and sorrow at not seeing their country's flag wave over this dear piece of Egyptian land. This flag has been hoisted and it shall never fall again, with the will of God, the determination of men, and the unity of the beloved homeland.

Egypt's flag was hoisted on every inch of this Egyptian soil. Honor was restored and millions of men, women, and children regained their pride and dignity. Strong hands and conscientious minds have worked together to rebuild and reconstruct.

Results achieved through the development plan in 6 years on the free land of Sinai inspire admiration and even exhilaration. Sinai is no longer a piece of land isolated from the heart of the homeland.

There has been reconstruction, agricultural land has increased, schools and hospitals have been built, roads have been paved, water and electricity networks have reached everywhere, media services reach all inhabitants, tourist areas have prospered. This was not the case in the Sinai for thousands of years.

This is a practical and clear expression of national awakening on the road to a renaissance era. It is wonderful evidence that national will is capable of achieving dignified life through work and knowledge, determination to surmount all obstacles, and confrontation of all difficulties.

The awakening in Sinai should be an example emulated in all our spheres of activity as we build and reconstruct to compensate for what we have missed. In this way we will prove to the whole world that the Egyptian people, with a 7,000-year history of civilization, will not abandon their faith, will not lose their creative ability, and will achieve the impossible, despite difficult economic conditions, which are the result of our adherence to our vanguard role in the causes of the Arab nation and our great sacrifices to liberate the Arab nation and enable it to determine its future freely.

Sinai gives us a vivid example for eliminating the consequences of aggression and declaring our will to build and reconstruct. It is a message of peace.

We did not wage war for the sake of war. Our heroes in the Armed Forces threw themselves into the battle and sacrificed their lives so peace could become a reality.

The message of peace is the establishment of a correct society capable of fostering hope far from the tragedy of wars and their bloody effects. I take this opportunity to address a warm greeting to the Armed Forces, which, according to Eastern and Western observers, achieved a military miracle in the October War, according to all measurements.

On this day we must remember venerably our innocent martyrs whose blood mixed with the sands of Sinai. The homeland of free men will not forget its hero martyrs who died for its freedom.

On this day we must also remember all those who suffered because of the war. Their great sacrifices were justified, because they now live on free land.

You now see that we live in an area of the world plagued by bloody wars and terrorism, which with its known evils is trying to control the destiny of the region, already torn by conflicts and prey to international ambitions.

This dangerous situation prompts us to cling harder to peace and the message of peace. Therefore, we spare no effort in the Arab and international arenas so the peoples of this region may reach this supreme goal and so all efforts are dedicated to reconstruction and development for the sake of man's happiness.

Brothers and sisters, the burdens of peace are less than those of war. The responsibilities of peace dictate that we always face up to the responsibilities of construction.

The responsibilities of construction require that we not dissipate our efforts in useless political arguments that will only harm the nation's unity. We must be united by awareness, willpower, and determination to achieve economic independence.

Economic independence requires that we shoulder the greatest burdens, foremost of which is to alleviate the sufferings of the unskilled masses. Before anything else, this requires that we be fully prepared to preserve our national unity, that we refrain from political maneuvers, and that we make the people's interests paramount among our national goals.

We are now a free society and we must all invest this freedom in a legitimate race toward consolidating our national unity and building a sound society. We do not oppose parties that criticize, assess, and espouse different opinions, as this is sound democracy, which we adhere to and foster.

However, we do oppose partisanship which maneuvers and seeks to impose its opinion and stir up fabricated storms, as this undermines democracy and poses a foolish threat to our way of life.

We want all opinions to be expressed freely and sincerely, fully respecting the opinions of others. However, we do not want any opinion to be based on ideological terror to stifle the opinions of others. This is the just and sound basis of our concept of freedom and democratic goals.

The areas of general effort are extensive and can accommodate all workers. Our hopes and aspirations are lofty and enormous and call on every Egyptian man and woman to participate in achieving them, through sound opinions, persistent work, and proper assessment of our capabilities, which we seek to enhance and promote. We do not need to shout at each other with rhetoric and applause; we need work, using our brains and brawn.

Therefore, I say with complete conviction: How magnificent it is to adhere to truth and facts, being candid with the millions. The road is difficult, long, and full of hardships, but we will not stop.

We proceed ever forward, ready to confront hardships, but we will never turn back. We must follow our consciences, not letting our personal ambitions control us.

Brother citizens, in the name of the message of peace, in the name of the martyrs who offered their souls and wrote in their blood the document of freedom and independence, in the name of the Egyptian willpower which crushed the invaders throughout the ages and raised the banners of sovereignty and victory, I speak to you, from heart to heart, on liberation day.

As we have succeeded in liberating the land, we should all cooperate to liberate our lives from all hardships and difficulties. Our objective is to end suffering, establish happy homes, and achieve honorable lives.

All this can be achieved through stability, a spirit of cooperation and cohesion, and the promotion of democracy.

Our banners have been raised and will continue to fly forever. This is the will of the people, who will not be affected by cries that try to obstruct the march or block the road.

We are proceeding with our national policy to the farthest horizons. We are proceeding along the road to its end. We implore Almighty God to guide our steps toward that which brings good and success.

Abu Ghazalah Cited on Memorandum With U.S.

NC221551 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1255 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 22 Apr (MENA)—Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, deputy prime minister of defense and war production [as received], has pointed out that the Egyptian-U.S. memorandum of understanding which was recently signed in Washington does not constitute an agreement, but rather a formula that notes the two countries' desire to cooperate in certain fields, such as having access to the best weapons granted by the United States to other friendly countries.

He noted that the memorandum of understanding represents a certificate of acknowledgment for the Egyptian war industry, as well as for Egyptian scientists. It means that what we produce at the Egyptian war factories could be exported to Washington, he added.

He noted that the memorandum allows Egypt to take part in the United States in tenders for manufacturing and supplying military products and it also provides for cooperation between Egyptian and U.S. scientists in military research for the joint production of weapons.

In an interview with the Egyptian weekly magazine UKTUBAR, to be published the day after tomorrow, Sunday [24 April], Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah said the memorandum is an attempt to seek maximum benefits from the U.S. annual grant to the Egyptian Armed Forces, which amounts to $1.3 billion. He noted Egypt has been trying to sign this memorandum for 4 years.

Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah denied the existence of any secret clauses in the memorandum. He noted that before the agreement was signed President Husni Mubarak formed a special committee to scrutinize the memorandum.

It was also closely examined by legal and other competent experts. He added that the memorandum has already been put into effect, noting that an agreement was reached with the United States to produce the most advanced antitank rocket.

Turning to Egyptian-Libyan relations, Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah denied that Egypt had sent special forces to the Western Desert to carry out an act of aggression against Libya.

He affirmed that Egypt has never thought of attacking Libya. He said that Libyan Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's recent statement aimed at driving a wedge between Egypt and some Arab countries by giving the latter the impression that we are amassing troops along the borders with Libya.

This statement could also have been an attempt on Al-Qadhdhafi's part to temper the situation inside his country, in light of his deteriorating economic and security position, he said.

Regarding the situation in the Gulf, Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah emphasized once again that Egypt's security and that of the Gulf are inseparable. He noted that national security is not confined to military security alone, but also includes economic, political, and social security as well.

Asked whether Egypt would provide assistance to the Gulf states in the event of danger, Abu Ghazalah said it is the duty of the Egyptian Armed Forces to always be ready and that any decision related to these forces must come from the political leadership and the constitutional authorities must be notified.

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Ramadan/October War, Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah said that a special theater will be set up this year near the Cairo Stadium to put on a show called the October Panorama, which will depict by sound, picture, and live display what happened during the October War, he said.

'Abd al-Majid, PNC's Kamal Meet in Cairo

NC241613 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met with PNC member Sa'id Kamal today. Following the meeting, the PNC official

disclosed that they had discussed the latest developments regarding the Palestinian issue, as well as the contacts and moves the Palestinians have undertaken with the aim of attaining a unified Arab stand to confront the international situation and to make firm decisions on the current proposals regarding the Palestinian issue.

He added that Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid informed him of Egypt's stand on recent regional developments and the contacts which Egypt has made to promote the peace process.

The PNC member pointed out Egypt had asserted it respects an independent decision-making role for the Palestinians, in addition to nonintervention in the PLO's internal affairs. 'Abd al-Majid also affirmed that Egypt supports the Palestinian cause, Sa'id Kamal added.

The PNC member said Dr 'Abd al-Majid had assured him of the support of the Egyptian Government and people for the Palestinian people and their condemnation of the criminal assassination of Palestinian leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

'Abd al-Majid Reportedly To Visit Moscow 22 May

JN231755 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic
22 Apr 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] AL-WAFD has learned that the visit to Moscow by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, will begin on 22 May, prior to the next U.S.-Soviet summit which will be held at the end of May.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid's visit to the USSR has been postponed more than once because USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze was preoccupied with resolving the Afghan problem.

The USSR ambassador in Cairo, Gennadiy Zhuravlev, had briefed Dr 'Abd al-Majid on the details of the Geneva agreements on the Afghan problem. Pakistan and Afghanistan, along with representatives from the USSR and the United States, reached these agreements.

Daily Criticizes U.S.-Israeli Memorandum

NC230716 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2252 GMT
22 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 22 Apr (MENA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH has expressed dismay over the signing of a memorandum of understanding by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir.

The memorandum grants Israel equal treatment with NATO countries in strategic fields. The move, the newspaper writes in Saturday's edition, came as the world was expecting Washington to pressure Shamir for being a leading opponent of peace and placing obstacles before the peace process.

The memorandum, the newspaper writes, came as a gift to Israel and will only increase its intransigence and heavy-handed policing of the occupied territories. The move is particularly deadly to the efforts of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and his peace initiative in the Middle East, the paper says.

The paper describes the new U.S. move as bewildering and says it puts Arab-U.S. relations in a precarious situation, renewing questions about the credibility of the United States vis-a-vis Arab countries and about its bias toward Israel and hard-line Israelis.

It is only natural, AL-JUMHURIYAH says, for Israel to hold on to the occupied Arab territories and press ahead with its oppressive measures against the heroes of the uprising.

Israel derives economic gain from the continued occupation of the territories, which constitute a second important market for Israeli products.

The newspaper concludes that the time is ripe for a responsible Arab summit to discuss the situation in the occupied territories. A unified Arab position would be instrumental in defending Arab interests and fulfilling the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi, Al-Asad Talk by Phone 22 Apr

LD240730 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0710 GMT
24 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 24 Apr (JANA)—A telephone conversation took place the day before yesterday between the brother leader of the revolution and President Hafiz al-Asad.

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives 'Arafat 23 Apr

LD240726 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0705 GMT
24 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 24 Apr (JANA)—The brother leader of the revolution received Brother Yasir 'Arafat yesterday.

Tunisia's Baccouche Assists Mediation With Egypt

LD231706 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1520 GMT
23 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Tripoli, 23 Apr (TANJUG)—The Kuwaiti AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM newspaper has said that the visit of Tunisian Prime Minister Brother Hedi Baccouche to Egypt is within the context of efforts by Tunisia to mediate between the Great Jamahiriyah and Egypt and to end the dispute between them.

Commenting on this report, the JANA Arab affairs editor said: The Great Jamahiriyah ended all its bilateral problems with Egypt with the important speech made by

the brother leader of the revolution on 28 March, the 18th anniversary of the expulsion of British forces and bases from the Arab Libyan territory. [passage omitted]

The editor adds: If AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM is right in its report about Tunisian mediation between Libya and Egypt, such a mediation must lead to extremely important results, including Egypt breaking links with the Zionist enemy and abandoning the stable David agreements with which the defunct Al-Sadat tied Egypt, and endeavoring to liberate [words indistinct].

The JANA Arab affairs editor concluded by saying: The Great Jamahiriyah welcomes any sincere Arab effort seeking to make Egypt break its ties with the Zionist enemy and U.S. imperialism and to return Egypt once again to the struggle for the liberation of Palestine and the unity of the Arab nation from the ocean to the Gulf.

U.S. Foreign Policy, Attitude Criticized

U.S.-Israeli Memorandum

LD231021 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0700 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Apr (JANA)—The day before yesterday, Reagan, the head of the U.S. Administration, and the terrorist Yitzhak Shamir signed a strategic memorandum of understanding which reflects the U.S. commitment to consecrate the enemy occupation of the Palestinian Arab territories and give a new dimension to the crusading Zionist alliance, which is aimed at annihilating Arab existence.

U.S. State Department spokesman (S. Kelly) described this memorandum as representing the close ties between the U.S. Administration and the Zionist enemy and as a U.S. commitment to guarantee the security of the Zionists.

JANA's international affairs editor commented on this, saying:

The signing of the so-called strategic memorandum of understanding between the U.S. Administration and the Zionist enemy is nothing new. It is an extension of the U.S.-Zionist strategic military agreement which was signed earlier and it does not go beyond stressing the organic cohesion between the U.S. Administration and the Zionist enemy.

If there is anything new, it is the fact this agreement defeats any excuse for those who put their money on the crumbs of U.S. policy and who are still dreaming of the possibility of what they call independent dealing with the U.S. position.

The editor added: Insofar as this U.S.-Zionist step decides the question of the impossibility of distinguishing between the United States and the Zionist enemy, and insofar as it decisively and conclusively proves that the United States and the Zionists are the same, this proves the U.S. Administration's disregard of and disrespect for those who think the United States is their friend and that they can put their money on this friendship in the U.S. handling of the Arab cause.

He said: The U.S. Administration's deliberate signing of its strategic agreement with the Zionist enemy on the 40th anniversary of the usurpation of Palestine and the State Department spokesman's statement that this memorandum reflects a long-standing U.S. commitment to guarantee the security of the Zionists summarize the essence of the U.S. policy and stance in dealing with the Arab nation and its central issue, Palestine.

It is a policy based on a firm U.S. principle to protect the Zionist enemy and consecrate its occupation of the Arab territories. If we add the coincidence of the signing of this memorandum and the escalation of the people's rebellion led by the generation of anger in occupied Palestine, then the motives and dimensions of the feverish U.S. movements in the region become clearly exposed, especially the shuttle tour by U.S. Secretary of State Shultz.

It became crystal clear that the final result of any U.S. move within this framework is what was expressed by the State Department spokesman in her explanation of the memorandum, which relies basically on suppressing a resistance to the Zionist occupation and, hence, implementing the U.S. solution, which aims at guaranteeing the security of the Zionist enemy.

Concluding his commentary, the editor stressed that this U.S.-Zionist step consolidates the credibility of what we have repeatedly stressed, that the United States is the enemy of the Arabs and that its alliance with the Zionist enemy is not restricted to a certain phase, but is a strategic alliance within the framework of the new crusade of hate against the Arab nation which is aimed at obstructing it from closing its ranks and establishing its unity and, hence, defeating its enemies.

Kuwaiti Airways Hijacking

LD231713 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1515 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Apr (JANA)—The U.S. Administration has announced that it will pursue the hijackers of the Kuwaiti Airways aircraft to bring them to justice. The U.S. Administration's spokeswoman asserted her government's displeasure at the measures taken by Algeria with regard to the Kuwaiti airliner.

The international affairs editor has commented on this. He said: "Once again the arrogance of the U.S. Administration has prompted it to appoint itself an international gendarme and guardian, interfering in everything regardless of whether it has anything to do with them or not.

And when the United States takes on such a role it is merely trying to play an overt, old game: to make the world believe the United States is concerned, despite the fact no one on this earth, including the American people themselves, can be unaware the U.S. Administration is primarily responsible for instability and threats to international peace and security by its efforts to sow terror in various corners of the world, playing with world security and stability."

The editor added: "The U.S. Administration's brazen attitude is very clear when this administration claims its eagerness to combat terrorism at a time when the world is still being burned by the fires of its overt and covert terrorism.

This includes the concentration of its military fleets, the spread of its military bases, the deployment of its weapons of destruction everywhere in the world, and its plots against peoples and regimes aspiring to freedom.

In the latter case, it has gone as far as launching military aggression against them and plotting assassination against those who are struggling against U.S. hegemony and its imperialist policy."

The editor pointed out that the U.S. Administration does not feel embarrassed when interfering in sisterly Algeria's internal affairs and discrediting its efforts to find a peaceful solution to the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner.

Furthermore, through the U.S. State Department's spokeswoman, it has announced it is not satisfied with the outcome of Algeria's efforts despite the fact Algeria has asserted, through its interior minister, that as far as the hijackers of the aircraft are concerned, the matter concerns only Algeria and that Algeria has acted in this matter as a sovereign state.

Mediterranean Naval Exercises

LD241042 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0900 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli 24 Apr (JANA)—The U.S. Administration has announced its intention to carry out military exercises with the cooperation of some NATO military naval units in the Mediterranean. U.S. sources have asserted that such exercises will begin on 25 April and last until 18 May.

JANA's international affairs editor commented on such provocative exercises saying: The U.S. Administration's intention, which has been made public, to carry out these exercises is to disturb yet again the Mediterranean's atmosphere after a short period of tranquillity, peacefulness, and stability.

Carrying out such exercises will bring about alarm and fear because U.S. military naval exercises constitute a threat to civil aviation, ships and liners, and travelers through this sea's waters and airspace.

JANA's international affairs editor called upon the Mediterranean countries, which are concerned with this vital sea, to intervene with strength and firmness to prevent such exercises from taking place and asked international organizations to intervene to prevent these exercises, as they constitute a serious threat to the movement of international navigation and travel, a matter which would threaten, in general, the security and stability of the waters and the airspace of this basin.

The editor concluded his comments, stressing the United States does not want peace to prevail over the Mediterranean region. It has left the rest of the seas and oceans behind to come here to threaten, by holding such exercises, the security and stability of this region, notwithstanding the fact the peoples of the Mediterranean strenuously and firmly reject this and only want peace and security for this vital region of the world.

Morocco

King Hassan Receives Call From King Fahd

LD231412 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] His Majesty King Hassan II has received a telephone call from His Majesty King Fahd ibn Abd al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques.

SPA said the custodian of the two holy mosques also telephoned Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid.

These contacts come within the continuing consultations undertaken by the Saudi monarch toward coordinating Arab efforts and consolidating Arab Islamic solidarity.

Receives Call From Mubarak

LD231425 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] His Majesty King Hassan II has received a telephone call from Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. The conversation between the Moroccan monarch and the Egyptian president included the Middle East situation and its developments, Arab and Islamic issues, and ways of closing Arab ranks and consolidating the powers of the Islamic nation. The telephone conversation also touched on various bilateral issues.

Sudan

Announcement of New Government 'Expected'

EA182309 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1400 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] The government of national concord is expected to be announced today, once the political parties have reached agreement on a national government charter. The parties resumed their meetings yesterday evening to decide conclusively on the four points of difference so that ministerial structures can be defined.

A member of the five-man committee said the parties had agreed on all the points under discussion, that they would form a goverment today, and that ministerial appointments would be made before the end of this week. According to one source, the dispute about the extent to which the shari'a should be applied has been settled.

Informed sources say that the southern parties agreed to the formation of a government of national concord when political forces recently contacted them about their participation in the next government, and they are said to have submitted the names of candidates for the ministerial posts allocated to them.

The informed sources said that the southern parties candidates are:

Peter Gatkuoth, deputy chairman of the Southern Sudanese Political Association, for the post of deputy prime minister.

Aldo Ajo, Lawrence Modi Tombi, Joshua Dewal, and (Baye Caesar) for the four ministries allocated to them in the government of national concord.

Eliaba Surur was nominated as and voted chairman of the Southern Council; Angelo Beda is to be his deputy. Major General Peter Serrillo is to be governor of Equatoria; Gabriel Yowal Dok, governor of Upper Nile; and Isaiah Kulang, governor of Bahr al-Ghazal.

Regional Ministers include: Uthman al-Tawil, Lawrence Lual, Michael Mario, (Gao Sak)—a representative of SAPC [Sudanese African Political Congress], and (Ramadan Chuol).

The sources said that the Southern Council would resume its business in accordance with the provisions of the Addis Ababa agreement.

Islamic Front Agrees To Join New Government

JN241932 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1710 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 24 Apr (SUNA)—The Islamic Front has agreed to join the national reconciliation government already endorsed by the Al-Ummah Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, the southern parties, and the Sudanese National Party, now that a disagreement over a timetable for enforcing the Islamic shari'a has been overcome. The Front had wanted the agreement to set up the government to provide for implementation of the Islamic shari'a within 60 days of its formation.

'Ali 'Uthman Muhammad Taha, deputy secretary general of the Front, said it has been satisfied with the formula proposed by the Al-Ummah party to meet the front's reservations over the timetable.

The Front has received appeals to join the government from State Council Chairman Ahmad al-Mirghani and the unionist southern parties, he added. Taha said the Al-Ummah Party has shown the Front the proposed structure of the new govenrment.

Al-Mahdi Cited on Relief Supplies to South

JN231055 Khartoum SUNA in English 1015 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, April 24 (SUNA)—Premier Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has entrusted the Foreign Ministry to review the agreement, with the International Red Cross, on transporting relief stuff to the victims in the south, the daily AL-SUDANI issued here today reported.

The daily quoted Al-Mahdi as saying the Mercy Council has failed to reach an agreement with the rebel forces of Col. John Garang on transporting the relief supplies to the war affected area.

Al-Mahdi Meets Returning 'Mujahidin'

JN231547 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1420 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 23 Apr (SUNA)—Approximately 400 of the Al-Ansar mujahidin returned home from the Ethiopian area of Gadud the day before yesterday following an emigration lasting 18 years.

This morning, Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi visited the Al-Ansar mujahidin. He welcomed them and asserted that the country is now enjoying freedom, pointing out that there are various plans for settlement. He expressed hope that the mujahidin will contribute to building the homeland and supporting the Al-Ansar sect.

The Al-Ansar mujahidins' return to the country took place under the supervision of a committee co-chaired by Mirghani Dayfallah, official in charge of returnees' and camps' affairs in the Al-Ansar sect, and Colonel Muhammad 'Abduh, officer from the People's Armed Forces General Command.

1,000 'Rebels' Said Killed by Armed Forces

EA221607 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1400 GMT 22 Apr 88

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-AYYAM reports that 5 officers and 50 soldiers were martyred during a battle against rebel forces on the Malakal Nasir road. Another 80 soldiers were wounded. However, the forces defeated the rebels, who fled toward the border, leaving behind 500 bodies.

In a separate engagement a unit of the Armed Forces was involved in a fierce battle against rebel forces last Sunday, after they were ambushed en route from Malakal to Nasir. The rebels lost 500 soldiers. The losses of the Armed Forces were 38 killed and 43 wounded.

Situation Under 'Full Control'

JN231618 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1424 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 23 Apr (SUNA)—General Fawzi Ahmad al-Fadil, Armed Forces commander in chief, has asserted that the situation in southern Sudan is reassuring and under the Armed Forces' full control.

After receiving State Council Member Dr 'Ali Hasan Taj al-Din here today, the commander in chief said the Armed Forces are chasing remnants of the outlaws everywhere. His excellency added that during the meeting they discussed a number of Armed Forces' administrative issues.

Regarding the situation on the country's western borders, his excellency said the Armed Forces are conducting large-scale operations in these border areas to enforce security and chase the gangs which carry out armed looting. He added that the Armed Forces are also working to provide security for the citizens.

Tunisia

Mestiri Says Ties With U.S. Could 'Deteriorate'

LD241150 Kuwait KUNA in English 1046 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, April 24 (KUNA)—Tunisian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mestiri Sunday was quoted here as affirming that the relations between his country and the United States will deteriorate if Washington vetoes the Tunisian draft resolution condemning Israel for assassinating PLO military leader Khalil al-Wazir.

He told daily AL-ITTIHAD that despite the existence of good relations between Tunisia and the United States and plans to boost such relations, the United States is pursuing conflicting policies that harm the relations with Tunis, in a clear reference to the understanding memorandum which was recently signed between the United States and the Israeli entity.

Mestiri affirmed that the recent Zionist aggression on his country which resulted in killing "Abu Jihad" [Khalil al-Wazir] eight days ago does not affect his country's support to the PLO, warning that the conflict with Israel will escalate further, unless the United States puts pressure on Israel to accept peace.

The Tunisian foreign minister called on the Palestinians to continue the uprising until they achieve their legitimate rights.

He, meanwhile, added that the assassination had killed Middle East peace, saying his country has got special reports and documents on the plane which supported the recent attack on Tunisia.

However, he noted that the Zionist entity has acknowledged the incident and gave further details over the event.

In conclusion, he expressed hope that the UN should lead the world in taking positive action in condemning the Israeli terrorist action.

Mediation Role Between Egypt, Libya Reported

JN231933 Kuwait AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM in Arabic 22 Apr 88 p 1

[Text] AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM has learned from its own sources that Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche's recent visit to Cairo was a part of the efforts being exerted by the Tunisian Government to mediate between Cairo and Libya and to end differences between the two sisterly countries as an example of Arab solidarity.

The sources said Tunisia will hold further contacts with senior officials in Libya and Cairo for this purpose and for the sake of ironing out all differences between the two sisterly countries within the framework of attempts to remove all obstacles in the path of Arab solidarity.

Minister Views Internal Situation, Summit

PM211547 London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 16 Apr 88 pp 15, 16

[Interview with Information Minister Abdelwahab Abdallah by Ihsan Bakr in Tunis; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Bakr] What about former President Bourguiba? How is he living at present?

[Abdallah] President Habib Bourguiba has been treated in a humane and dignified way. He has been treated with deference and respect; his ways have been respected as an elderly person who has to spend his remaining days in peace and tranquillity; former President Bourguiba has even been given the freedom to choose the residence he wishes to live in.

[Bakr] But are court proceedings of a political nature underway against Bourguiba and the symbols of his era, at least in recent years?

[Abdallah] No political court proceedings are underway and no past files have been opened up. We have been saying that since 27 November and today we reemphasize it.

There are just three people being tried, not for political reasons but for cases involving embezzlement of state funds and such like. The three are Mansour Skhiri, Bourguiba's secretary Mahmoud Ben Husayn, and former Tunisian Airlines chief Hedi Atiyah.

[Bakr] What about the former minister, Mohamed Sayah?

[Abdallah] Mohamed Sayah is presently at home and he is completely free.

[Bakr] Is Bourguiba permitted to receive visitors?

[Abdallah] Bourguiba is living in complete peace in his home and he is in good health; with him are his niece Saida Sassi and members of his family.

[Bakr] What about the return of former Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali?

[Abdallah] The meaning of 27 November is tolerance. The people living abroad can return whenever they wish. Anyone who has problems with the law ought to place himself under the jurisdiction of the law, which is the arbitrator and authority.

[Bakr] What about the nature of the relationship between the government and the Islamic movement?

[Abdallah] Our slogan is love and tolerance. With no disrespect or neglect, 4,000 detained Muslims have been released. The government says Islam is not the monopoly of one group to the exclusion of another. And there is no room for any group to monopolize religion.

If some people want to create an Islamic party, then they can do so. But they cannot employ religion to serve their aims. [passage omitted]

[Bakr] What about the press laws?

[Abdallah] At present there are guarantees for Tunisian journalists and freedom of the press is guaranteed for everyone. Any owner of a new newspaper just has to submit a notification to the Interior Ministry.

If a permit is not given to him within a month, then his not being notified is tantamount to approval of the newspaper's publication. Previously, the lack of an Interior Ministry response meant the newspaper could not be published. This situation has now changed.

[Bakr] With regard to the emergency Arab summit on the uprising, is it true Tunisia has excused itself from holding it on its territory? And why does Tunisia not take the initiative in convening the summit and thus solve the problem of finding a summit venue?

[Abdallah] Tunisia is in favor of convening the summit and we have sent our approval on convening the summit. Algeria put forward the proposal and we give the meeting our blessing.

However, with respect to convening the summit in Tunisia, our present circumstances—no more than 4 months has passed since the new government came to power—do not enable us to call for a summit in Tunisia.

There are fraternal states which have experience and conditions that permit that, but, as far as we are concerned, our present circumstances do not enable us to do so. If we are able, then we will participate in the summit meetings.

Bahrain

Prime Minister Says Hijackers' Passports Forged

JN231233 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Manama, 23 Apr (WAKH)—Bahraini Prime Minister His Highness Shaykh Khalifah ibn Salman Al Khalifah has denied news reports circulated to the effect that Bahraini citizens were among the hijackers of "Al-Jabiriyah," the hijacked Kuwaiti Airways plane.

In a statement made here today, his highness said: Since the 1st day of the plane hijacking when news agencies circulated reports to the effect that a number of the hijackers carried Bahraini passports, we determined that the passports were forged and that the bearers were not Bahraini citizens.

His highness called upon the newspapers that published these reports to ascertain the veracity of such items to avoid harming the Bahraini people through publishing such baseless reports. He added that the practice of forging passports of various nationalities is spread all over the world. He went on to say: We take pride in the fact that this peaceful state produces citizens who set exemplary standards of behavior for others and work to serve the interests of their state, their Gulf region, and their Arab nation.

Kuwait

Government Warns Iran Over Scud Missile Attack

LD221633 Kuwait KUNA in English 1452 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] United Nations, April 22 (KUNA)—Kuwait put Iran on notice Friday it reserves the right to take "appropriate measures" in the face of the firing of a Scud missile into Kuwaiti territory. In a letter addressed to Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah condemned this "deliberate and unjustified assault on the security and safety of Kuwait."

"The continuation and repetition of such hostile acts will heighten the tension in the region at a time when Kuwait is making an effort, with all the parties concerned, to calm the situation and to create the approporiate conditions for resolving the tragic conflict between the two Muslim neighbours, Iraq and Iran," he said.

Shaykh Sabah informed the U.N. chief executive that the Iranian charge d'affaires had been summoned to the Foreign Ministry, where he was presented with "Kuwait's strong protest at this heinous assault against its territory."

"This aggression was preceded by false Iranian accusations, of which we already have informed you in a previous letter concerning the Iranian threats against Kuwait," Shaykh Sabah told the secretary-general.

Leadership Figures Comment on Airliner Hijacking

Amir Expresses Thanks

LD232015 Kuwait KUNA in English 1728 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 23 (KUNA)—His Highness the Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah Saturday expressed congratulations for the Arabs, Muslims and all peace-loving peoples on the advent of the blessed, fasting month of Ramadan. On this holy occasion, his highness appealed to God to open hearts for cooperation, halt of bloodshed, protection of souls and property and that "we exchange greetings rather than missiles and congratulations instead of threats."

His highness described the 16-day hijacking of the Kuwaiti airliner as "conflict between innocent unarmed people and ghosts who rejected to appear in the light. From the dark they came (?out and to) the dark they returned."

"In profound conviction we laid to rest our two martyrs," his highness said, thanking God for the release of the hostages and the plane's crew. His highness indicated that Kuwait had experienced attempts of blackmail and threats, but "we always adhered to what we believed was right and fair."

"Our approach has always been to condemn aggression, defend our land and people and establish justice throughout our homeland," his highness stressed. Despite attempts by some parties to penetrate our country's national unity, our people have proved that "Kuwait is our mother, father, land and honour," his highness affirmed.

Shaykh Jabir highlighted that the honour of Kuwait is not a commodity in politics market and the principles of Kuwait are not cards on negotiations tables.

His highness expressed full support for the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people, and deep (condolences) for martyrdom of Palestinian leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] "who lived and died for the sake of his country."

The hijacking of the Kuwaiti plane was (?aimed) at drawing attention away from the Palestinian cause for a period of time which the enemy exploited to escalate aggression, murder, blowing up houses and reaching the peak with the assassination of Abu Jihad.

The hijacking of the Kuwaiti airliner has depicted a distorted, unreal image of Islam, Shaykh Jabir said noting that "many are the sins which are perpetrated in the name of Islam."

His highness extended full gratitude for Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid, government and people for their approval of the [word indistinct] of the plane on the Algerian soil, and for freeing its crew and passengers.

Shaykh Jabir also expressed thankfulness for the Palestine Liberation Organization, represented in its chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

Kuwait [words indistinct] sympathy and cooperation expressed by heads of state of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and [word indistinct] Islamic and international communities as well as local and foreign public opinion, his highness stressed.

In conclusion, his highness expressed thanks for heads of state and for those who expressed feelings of sympathy with Kuwait by various means.

Prime Minister Denies Deal

LD251445 Kuwait KUNA in English 1135 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 25 (KUNA)—H.H. the crown prince and premier Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah has denied that some kind of a deal was struck with the hijackers or money was paid to secure the release of the passengers aboard the Kuwaiti airliner.

The crown prince and premier called on all citizens to be on their toes and be cautious of those spreading these rumours claiming that Kuwait had paid a ransom in exchange for the freedom of the detained 31 passengers aboard "Al-Jaberiyah."

In a discussion grouping KUNA's board Chairman and Director General Barjes Hmoud al-Barjes and editors-in-chief of local dailies at Al-Sha'ab palace last night, Shaykh Sa'd hailed PLO chairman for his good offices to guarantee the freedom of the hostages while in Larnaca, Cyprus and also efforts exerted by the Algerian and the Cypriot authorities.

H.H. the crown prince and premier recalled that while the hijacked plane was in Mashhad airport, Kuwait urged the Iranian authorities to keep the aircraft grounded until all passengers are freed, while denying an Iranian statement saying that Iran proposed to Kuwait the possibility of storming the plane.

"This talk is incorrect and contradicts with truth and reality," said Shaykh Sa'd in reference to an Iranian official statement that it suggested storming the plane. He noted that despite threats by the hijackers to kill all on board if their demands were not met, Kuwait kept saying "no" and any kind of bargain or deal will not be struck no matter what the consequences.

Addressing the attendance, which also included Information Minister Shaykh Jabir Mubrak al-Hamad and other ministry officials, the crown prince and premier said that Kuwait has proven to the whole world that it will not budge an inch from its situation or principles.

"I always told you," he noted, "that the power of the Kuwaiti people lies within the unity of the internal front, and all said in one voice: We refuse to bow and we reject blackmail."

After ending his opening address, a dialogue was held between H.H. and chief editors of daily newspapers and weekly magazines, in which the information minister thanked H.H. for his praise of the Kuwaiti press.

In replying to a question by one of the chief editors, Shaykh Sa'd reiterated Kuwait's position toward rumours saying that a deal was struck between the government and the hijackers, stressing, "We don't work in the dark. We have worked and will work for the interest of Kuwait and its people."

As for forming a committee to pin down security gaps that lead to the tragic incident and determine inefficiencies relating to the hijack, Shaykh Sa'd affirmed that the cabinet in its meeting yesterday has decided to form a special committee under the chairmanship of Justice Minister Dari al-'Uthman. He added that the committee will have complete freedom and all the time it needs to conduct a thorough investigation into the incident, affirming that if any intended negligence was discovered, those responsible will "pay the price."

Regarding security firms, he noted that Kuwait has started setting plans to qualify Kuwaiti youth for anti-terrorism techniques, urging, in this respect, all Arabs to join hands in combating terrorism wherever it is.

The crown prince and premier said that the "forgive and forget" policy of the government is no longer valid, vowing that those who intend to infringe on the country's security will pay dear price. Asked if the lack of security on the hijacked plane is due to a dispute between the Ministries of Finance and Interior, he said, "we all have to await the report by this committee responsible for the investigation in this matter."

On whether he believes that the Israeli intelligence (Mosad) had a role in the hijack, Shaykh Sa'd said that there is not any solid information available yet of Mosad's involvement, but noted that it will not strike him as strange that Mosad had a hand in the incident.

On the freedom of the press in regard of the hijack now that the whole ordeal is over and the passengers are safe and sound, the crown prince and premier affirmed that the press is allowed to publish anything as long as it does not damage ties between Kuwait and Arab and friendly countries.

On arresting the hijackers and trying them, he stressed that such an aim requires intensive efforts and cooperation between all world countries. Requested to oust or freeze some of those accused of negligence in regard of the hijack, he said that such a decision is premature, adding that the committee has 90 days to submit its report and has the right to question any person or body.

At the end, H.H. expressed joy over Iraq's liberation of the Al-Faw peninsula, hoping that Iran would follow in Iraq's footsteps in accepting U.N. Resolution 598 on putting an end to the war.

Defense Minister on Security

LD240851 Kuwait KUNA in English 0812 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 24 (KUNA)—The Government of Kuwait will take speedy measures to counter crimes such as the hijacking of the airliner early this month and prevent its recurrence, Defense Minister Shaykh Nawwaf Al-Ahmad said Sunday. The Council of Ministers will look into the measures required to avert recurrence of such incidents from all angles to ensure safety and security of the citizens, the minister told daily AL-WATAN in a statement carried today.

Shaykh Nawwaf was referring to the 16-day ordeal of the Kuwait airways Boeing 747 which ended in a happy tone last Wednesday with the return home of the passengers and crew from Algiers.

Shaykh Nawwaf said the hijacking of the airliner has fostered popular cohesion with the leadership of the country and proved the originality of the Kuwaiti policy and the respect the state enjoys from the international community.

The minister said nobody expected the government to bow to blackmail and terrorism or retreat from its principles and its Arab and Islamic contributions under pressure, adding that no concessions small or big were entertained at any time during the ordeal. He said the fact that the people were understanding of the nature of the challenge and determined to counter terrorism at any cost gave the government the force to reject all demands put forward by the hijackers.

The government was as concerned with developments of the tragedy as the people were but was confident the ordeal would end in the interest of the Kuwaiti people, the defense minister said.

ARAB TIMES Praises 'Victory' Over Hijackers

JN231456 Kuwait ARAB TIMES in English 21-22 Apr 88 p 6

["Opinion" by Ahmad al-Jarallah: "Kuwait: A Country of Principles"]

[Text] The banner of Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad, the banner of true principles, is at last victorious.

The hijackers, instruments of evil-minded masters, thought it would be easy to overcome a small country like Kuwait. They thought the presence of members of the ruling family among the hostages would force Shaykh Jabir to submit to their demands.

They forgot that in Kuwait there is no difference between the great and the small—all are equal. They forgot that the members of the ruling family were, first of all, citizens of Kuwait and would be the first to sacrifice for Kuwait's dignity and principles. The hijackers thought that by releasing only Kuwaiti Shi'ites, they would disrupt Kuwait's national unity and love.

The hijackers were influenced by these assumptions but found, along with their masters, popular support by the Kuwaiti people for their leaders and government. In Kuwait all raised the banner of Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad: No blackmail, no fear and no rescission from principles. Kuwait is a country of principles. The superpowers are the first to acknowledge this. They once submitted to blackmail and got nothing in return but more blackmail.

Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad remained steadfast and went through the danger of dealing with fools.

All in Kuwait have remained unshaken and have suffered with the hostages through their ordeal on the Al-Jabiriyah. We kept praying that Almighty God would solve the problem and that they would be released. We experienced their pain when they were forced to speak under the threat of their kidnappers. We were with them in spirit as the banner of Kuwait emerged victorious.

With this victory we should give them the honour they deserve for their display of courage. I hope they will realise the depth of the feelings of the people of Kuwait towards them, both while being held hostage and now that they are released.

The people of Kuwait are pleased that the hostages have been released and are pleased that another victory has been achieved over the foolish hijackers. The coming days will prove to the hijackers that they will be unable to escape punishment. And the masters of the hijackers have already experienced the bitter taste of this defeat among others.

PDRY

Joint YSP-Frelimo Communique Issued on Visit

EA222155 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic
1803 GMT 21 Apr 88

[Text] Brothers: Here is the text of the joint communique on the discussions between the YSP and the Frelimo party.

At the invitation of the Frelimo Central Committee, Brother Muhammad Sa'id 'Abdallah Muhsin, member of the Political Bureau and secretary of the YSP Central Committee, at the head of a high-level delegation, paid an official, friendly visit to the People's Republic of Mozambique from 12-19 April 1988.

Brother Muhsin and his delegation met Comrade Joaquim Alberto Chissano, president of Frelimo and the People's Republic of Mozambique. He handed him a message from Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the YSP Central Committee, on ways of deepening relations between the two friendly parties and peoples.

During his stay in Maputo, Brother Muhsin laid a wreath on the Mozambique Heroes Monument. He visited the Museum of the Revolution, the knitwear factory, and the harbor of the capital, Maputo. The delegation also traveled to Safala Province where it visited a development project and observed the destruction caused by the war aimed at destabilizing the Mozambican people.

Official discussions were held in a cordial atmosphere between the delegations of the two parties. They were led, on Yemeni side, by Brother Muhammad Sa'id 'Abdallah Muhsin, member of the Political Bureau and secretary of the YSP Central Committee, and on the Mozambican side by Comrade Jorge Rebelo, member of the Political Bureau and secretary of the Frelimo Central Committee. They concerned relations between the two friendly parties and countries.

The two sides expressed their gratification concerning the growth in these relations. They renewed their determination to work for their reinforcement in the interest of the two parties' revolutionary aims and principles.

The YSP delegation had an opportunity to see the effects of the war launched by the apartheid regime and by which it aims to commit aggression against the People's Republic of Mozambique and destabilize it. It was also observed that despite this aggression, the Mozambican people, led by Frelimo, are nevertheless determined to defeat the enemy and build the country through implementation of the economic reform program.

The visiting delegation expressed its country's full support for the efforts being exerted by the Mozambican people and their party. For its part, the Frelimo delegation expressed its deep appreciation of the PDRY's successes. It reaffirmed its solidarity with the struggle being waged by the YSP and the PDRY people. It also expressed its admiration for the YSP's prudence in confronting the 13 January conspiracy and its ability to protect the victories of the revolution and safeguard the independence of the people and the sovereignty of the PDRY. It wished the party success in implementing the resolutions issued by the general party congress and in the struggle to reunite the two parts of Yemen by peaceful and democratic means.

The two sides stressed the importance of continued contact between the two countries and exchanging experiences and views between the two parties and governments and mass organizations.

The two sides expressed satisfaction at the conclusion of the Soviet-U.S. agreement on the elimination and destruction of medium- and short-range missiles. They described it as a step that would help to achieve progress toward lasting international peace and security.

The two sides reaffirmed their support for Soviet-Afghan initiatives and UN efforts to solve the Afghan problem.

Referring to the situation in southern Africa, the two sides expressed deep concern at the continued acts of aggression by the Pretoria regime against the African Frontline States, particularly the People's Republic of Angola. The two sides called for an end to these acts of aggression and the immediate withdrawal of South African forces from Angolan territory. They reaffirmed their support for the struggle of the people of South Africa, led by the ANC and other democratic forces, aimed at eliminating the apartheid regime. The two sides also called for continued joint efforts to implement UN Security Council Resolution No 435 on Namibia's independence. They expressed their support for the struggle of the Namibian people, led by SWAPO, their legitimate and sole representative.

Referring to the Middle East, the two sides hailed and supported the struggle of the Palestinian people and their heroic uprising against Israeli occupation, backing their right to return, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent national Palestinian state under the leadership of the PLO, their legitimate and sole representative.

They expressed their conviction of the need for an international conference under UN auspices in which all the parties concerned, including the PLO, will participate on an equal footing, as a means of achieving peace in the Middle East.

The two sides expressed concern at recent developments in the region stemming from the war between Iran and Iraq. The two sides called on those concerned to put an end to the acts of aggression and to solve the dispute by peaceful means in accordance with UN Security Council

Resolution No 589. The two sides also called for the immediate withdrawal of national [as heard] military forces and bases from the peninsula area and the Arab Gulf.

The two sides called for the Indian Ocean to be a zone of peace and security, free of nuclear weapons. The delegations from Frelimo and the YSP expressed concern at regional conflicts and support for just initiatives aimed at eliminating them. The two sides signed an agreement on cooperation between the two parties for the years 1988-89.

In a speech on behalf of his delegation, Brother Muhammad Sa'id 'Abdallah Muhsin expressed satisfaction with the results of the visit to the People's Republic of Mozambique and the fruitful meetings he held with members of Frelimo and the leadership of the state of Mozambique. He described them as an important contribution to strengthening the relations of friendship and solidarity between the peoples of Democratic Yemen and Mozambique.

Saudi Arabia

Iran Preparing 'New Crimes' Against Holy Places

JN240838 Al-Dammam AL-YAWM in Arabic
21 Apr 88 p 7

[Editorial: "The Criminal Iranian Scheme"]

[Text] Tehran's ayatollahs have arrogated to themselves the role of guardians over the Muslims. They even permitted themselves to form another Islamic religion and to decree who will go to Heaven and who will go to Hell in spite of the fact that all this is under God's jurisdiction. No human being, other than charlatans and fortune tellers, can claim they have a right to do this. It seems that the Iranians believe they are of a superior race and ask to be set apart from others.

This is what the Iranians seek to achieve through the wicked demands they have submitted to the Kingdom to give them privileged treatment. Two of these Iranian demands are suspect and part of an Iranian scheme to shed Muslim blood. The first demand is that the Kingdom allow them to demonstrate and to carry out rituals that Khomeyni recently incorporated into the rites of pilgrimage. The second demand is Iran's insistence on sending 150,000 pilgrims to the holy places although the decision limiting the number of this year's pilgrims had been made by the Islamic foreign ministers and not by the Kingdom. Therefore, Iran must submit its demand to the Islamic foreign ministers conference and not to the Kingdom.

The third point reveals an Iranian mindset not based on any logic or propriety but one that can be viewed as a threat to the Kingdom when Iran launched a slander campaign against it. The Iranians resorted to lies, slander, and the recruitment of hirelings to influence the Kingdom's stands. However, what infuriates the Iranians is that the Kingdom is standing fast.

What is important in these Iranian demands is that Iran is preparing new crimes or another massacre similar to that of last year. A regime that has committed odious crimes against mankind within the framework of the Iraq-Iran war and during the pilgrimage, and that hijacked the Kuwaiti airliner will not hesistate to commit other crimes. However, the Kingdom will not accept these demands and will not permit the Khomeyniite idols to return to holy Mecca.

Yemen Arab Republic

President on Yemeni Unity, Domestic Issues

JN231025 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic
1200 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Brother Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, has affirmed that democracy is the only option and the inalienable course of national construction. The people will have the right to express their opinions freely and to participate. He said this is the philosophy we opted for in Yemen and which we do not impose on others. [passage omitted] This came in a comprehensive statement made by the president to UAE television carried within "The Other Face" program aired last night.

Answering a question on his assessment of the march of our national experiment in light of the 26 September revolution, President Salih affirmed that the 26 September revolution is humanitarian. It saved the Yemeni people from ignorance, tyranny, and disease, he said. He added that it is the fruit of the persistent, hard struggle waged by our people to uproot the odious, unjust era of the imams, under which our people lived a miserable life.

The president said: Since the outbreak of the 26 September revolution, our people have been able to achieve prosperity, progress, and development despite the frustrations and plots that our revolution faced. Our people, he said, remained steadfast and bravely defended their revolution. Our people crowned their struggle with the 70-day steadfastness, which we consider a historic epic and splendid demonstration in the face of counterrevolutionary forces, President Salih said. Throughout that militant march, our people offered convoys of righteous martyrs.

In his answer, the president reviewed the experiment waged by our people after achieving national reconciliation in the seventies. All efforts were geared toward

domestic building, establishing institutions and organizations, and drafting laws and regulations, as our people only inherited ignorance, disease, and poverty from the imams' rule.

The president said that the revolution attained important revolutionary gains despite the plots and challenges imposed by various forces. The president said that since assuming the leadership of the homeland in 1978, he has been trying, together with all national forces and the good responsible forces from the people, to assess past experiments and benefit from them in order to build a new national experiment through responsible dialogue with all sons of the people. The national charter has been achieved. This national charter stems from the Koran, the sunna, and the Constitution. He added: We opted for political action. The General People's Congress belongs to all the people without discrimination. He added that on this basis our people were able to rebuild their national unity to a better stand. [passage omitted]

Answering a question on oil—how oil revenues will be employed, the current quantity, and future prospects—the president said: When I succeeded myself in my office, which I had the honor to assume, I promised to search for oil and other mineral resources. Praise be to God, this dream and ambition has been fulfilled. Oil has become a reality in our life. We began marketing oil in small quantities. We explained many times that oil revenues will be devoted to development, particularly economic and agricultural, and to completing the infrastructure. The president said that oil shipments, which are being exported, are not large. We export approximately 1,500 bpd [barrels per day]. In the next few months, they will increase to 200,000 bpd, possibly reaching 400,000 bpd in the next 2 years.

The president stated there are new discoveries in oil fields in addition to those announced in A and D oil fields and a number of others. Prospecting is still going on in the eastern and western regions in Tihamah. He said: We hope to achieve sufficient oil wealth to serve the people, their progress, prosperity, and dignity. We have plans and programs to employ this wealth. We believe that we have many internal commitments in the interests of the citizens, who were deprived for a long time and who suffered from poverty and ignorance.

The brother president affirmed that oil will not change our country's political trends. He added that our country will continue to honor its commitments to contribute effectively to pan-Arab issues and all stands dictated by higher interests and pan-Arab duties in supporting the brothers.

Answering a question on Yemeni unity, steps that have been achieved, and obstacles to the achievement of unity, President Salih said: The achievement of Yemeni unity is a strategic goal for our Yemeni people, and the accomplishment of the draft constitution of the united state is an advanced step and a great gain on the path of unity. Our people in the northern part are looking forward to the practical implementation of this project and to the restoration of Yemeni unity as soon as possible.

Answering a question on whether the presence of Brother 'Ali Nasir Muhammad in the northern part of the homeland poses any problem between the two parts or an obstacle to the achievement of unity, the brother leader explained that the presence of Brother 'Ali Nasir Muhammad in the northern part poses no problem because he is in his homeland, not in any other country. The Yemeni people are one people, which British colonialism and the imams attempted to dismember and divide, but our people overcame all obstacles and continued to embody their unity. He affirmed that our northern part will not allow anybody to carry out any aggressive or provocative act against our southern part. He added that efforts will continue to achieve dialogue and reconciliation between us and the sons of our people in the southern part within the framework of fraternal understanding to achieve national unity. He said that all should rise above their wounds and heal them. We hope this will be achieved and call on the two sides to reach understanding.

Answering a question on whether the presence of large numbers of evacuees from the southern part constitutes an economic burden to the northern part, the president said: Regardless of the economic burden, those evacuees are the sons of our people. We should shoulder our responsibilities toward them. We have been shouldering our responsibilities since the beginning of liberation. This is not the first time we have shouldered an economic or political burden. We have been shouldering burdens since the beginning of the liberation war and the departure of colonialism from the southern part of the homeland. There is no difficult problem in this regard.

On comprehensive Arab unity and whether the establishment of the GCC or the Greater Arab Maghreb will constitute a kind of mini-Arab unity blocs on the path of the comprehensive Arab unity, the leader president said that forms of unity such as the GCC or others are an advanced step on the path of achieving comprehensive Arab unity. He said that we do not consider such forms blocs but advanced steps on the path of achieving comprehensive unity. [passage omitted]

Answering a question on the Zionist threats against Arab countries and on whether our country is targetted by these threats in light of its known stands on the Palestine question and its large support for the Palestine cause, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: We always say that the Arab countries are not immune to the Zionist enemy's arrogance and aggression. The Zionists believe that the Arab countries and their peoples are their basic enemy. Any Arab country that believes it is immune to Zionist aggression is mistaken. We in Yemen do not worry about Zionist threats.

Saddam Husayn Speaks on Liberation of Al-Faw

JN241520 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0705 GMT 24 Apr 88

["Text" of speech by President Saddam Husayn at 23 April ceremony in Baghdad during which he awarded medals of valor to commanders of the Presidential Guard Force—recorded]

[Excerpts] There are many details of the Al-Faw battles. However, success comes from God and Almighty God asks man to organize and legitimize his endeavors. When man's intentions are honest and his endeavors are organized and legitimate, there will be a base for success, which comes from God.

The first order issued, or let us say the first meeting held by the General Command to discuss the plan for liberating Al-Faw, took place on 14 May 1986. At the time, the Presidential Guard Forces were less than they are now and their training was substandard.

The plan was based on the need to select and train formations of the Armed Forces in accordance with the general plan and the other detailed plans drawn up by the field commanders within the framework of the general plan.

The first order issued at that time was that these units should be trained under circumstances similar to that of Al-Faw and that each unit should be trianed in accordance with its mission.

It was also decided that the training should take place during the coldest moments during night and day in winter and in rainy weather and on muddy land and in fields similar to those of Al-Faw during the hottest times during summer.

These units were named and whenever these units were moved and formed, the enemy attacked us in certain places. As a result, we were obliged to use these units to confront the enemy. Since then, several battles took place and they were followed by the Al-Faw battle.

The enemy knew that many formations, including the Presidential Guard Forces, were being prepared and that after the Great Day and the Great Harvest battles, the enemy waged battles in the north to force us to use these formations.

We actually sent a large number of these forces, which were originally trained to liberate Al-Faw, to participate in these battles. But we preserved a large portion of the Army's formations and the Presidential Guard forces in order not to miss the opportunity to liberate Al-Faw.

While fierce battles raged in the north, we decided to liberate Al-Faw. We decided to fight there and to stop and destroy the enemy aned hit it where it hurts.

We summoned the field commanders while the battles raged in the north. After they were briefed on the situation, they began to activate and reconsider the details of their plans.

The intelligence from the north was very accurate. This information defined the movements, armament, and size of the enemy units west of Shatt al-'Arab, in Al-Faw, and east of Shatt al-'Arab, including rapid deployment units or supportive units.

The performance of the Presidential Guard Forces and the VII Army Corps in liberating Al-Faw was good in general. However, the Presidential Guard Forces and the VII Army Corps should not forget any shortcoming which took place during the operation.

Victory should not distract their attention from any shortcoming in the plan, the training, and the performance of the units and the commanders during operations. They should tell each other in sound spirit of comradeship: Let us improve our performance during other battles, God willing. [passage omitted]

Al-Faw is the most difficult part of the front. From now on, no one is allowed to say we are incapable of confronting the enemy. No one should even say:

If the enemy attacks, we will not be able to achieve great results in liberating the national land or destroying the enemy forces to achieve peace because Al-Faw is the most difficult part of the front.

In accordance with intelligence information, the forces prepared by the enemy to defend Al-Faw were the best forces. Just as God enabled you to achieve victory, He will support you in other fields because you are right. [passage omitted]

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

Communique No 3,154

JN221718 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1540 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad 22 Apr (INA)—Iraqi helicopter gunships today carried out 64 combat missions in operation sectors. They inflicted new losses in Iranian men and equipment before returning safely to base.

The Armed Forces General Command Communique No 3,154 issued here this evening rounded up the activities of the Iraqi forces for last night and today. It said the Iraqi naval forces this morning monitored a medium-sized naval target, scored a direct hit against it, destroyed it completely, and sank it with all hands.

The communique added the Iraqi forces killed 39 Iranians and destroyed 4 infantry positions, 1 SPG-9 gun, 1 observation post, and 1 shovel [preceding word in English].

Following is the communique:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The following is a roundup of our Armed Forces' activities for last night and today:

1. Our helicopter gunships today carried out 64 combat missions in the operation sectors. They inflicted new losses before returning safely to base, God be praised.

2. At 0720 [0320 GMT] today our naval forces monitored a medium-sized military target. It was dealt a direct hit, totally destroyed, and sunk with all hands. May our Navy's courageous men be blessed.

3. In the I Army Corps northern sector 32 enemy personnel were killed and others were wounded. Four infantry positions and one SPG-9 gun were destroyed.

4. Two scoundrels were killed and one observation post and one shovel were destroyed in the II Army Corps central sector.

5. One enemy soldier was killed in the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah. Four others were killed in the V Army Corps sector.

[Signed] The Armed Forces Genral Command, 22 April 1988

Abadan Bombing Denied

JN231317 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1235 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 23 Apr (WAKH)—The Iraqi military spokesman has denied that Iraqi forces used artillery or any other weapons to shell any Iranian residential areas yesterday.

'Abd al-Jabbar Muhsin, director of the Political Guidance Department at the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, told a WAKH correspondent in Baghdad Iraq is still committed to observing its decision which announced a moratorium on bombing Tehran and other Iranian cities.

Iran accused Iraq yesterday of shelling Abadan with artillery and claimed that human losses were caused by the shelling.

Muhsin accused Iran of failing to abide by the moratorium on bombing civilian targets and said: Iranian artillery shelled Darband-i Khan today.

Iraq put its moratorium on boming Tehran and other Iranian cities with missiles and aircraf into effect at midnight on Wednesday [20 April] laying down five principles for the observance of this moratorium. These five principles were announced at the beginning of March. [passage omitted]

Residential Areas Shelled

JN231552 Baghdad INA in English 1538 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, April 23, INA—Residential quarters in the northern Iraqi towns of Al-Sulaymaniyah and Darband-i Khan came today under criminal Iranian long-range artillery shelling.

An Iraqi military spokesman said the shelling resulted in the martyrdom and the wounding of a number of civilians including women and children and the damaging of a number of houses.

Communique No 3,155

JN231750 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1704 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,155 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 23 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The following is a roundup of our troops' activities for last night and today:

1. Our heroic Air Force carried out 68 combat missions today. They inflicted further losses on the aggressors in scoundrels, weapons, and equipment. Having flown these missions, all aircraft returned safely to base. God be praised.

2. The courageous knights of the helicopter gunships flew 60 combat sorties. They inflicted further losses on the enemy in personnel, positions, and equipment. Having flown these missions, they all returned with their helicopter gunships safely to base in God's care and protection.

3. Four enemy personnel were killed, one single-barreled machine gun was destroyed, and two ammunition dumps were blown up in the I Army Corps northern sector.

4. Two enemy personnel were killed, one shovel [preceding word in English] was damaged, and one ammunition dump was blown up in the II Army Corps central sector. Our units in the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah spotted a drone and downed it.

5. Three scoundrels were killed and two hovercraft were destroyed in the VI Army Corps sector east of the Tigris. One scoundrel was killed and one vehicle and one infantry position were destroyed in the VII Army Corps sector.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 23 April 1988

Iran Warned on Shelling

JN231856 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1806 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 23 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. At 1740 [1340 GMT] today, the Iranian regime directed its heavy and long-range artillery fire from the Iranian area of Ba'en, which is opposite the Panjwin area, at the Shwarbakh residential quarter which is located in the center of the city of Al-Sulaymaniyah.

The enemy shelling wounded seven civilians, including one child and three women, and demolished and damaged a number of houses.

This criminal act unequivocally reveals the Iranian regime's evil intentions as well as this regime's premeditated and preplanned intent to reignite the war of the cities once again, as it has always done.

In so doing, this regime is denying itself the chance to benefit from the opportunity granted to it by Iraq out of full supremacy and power and capability and in accordance with the principles which were contained in the official spokesman's statement which was issued on Wednesday on 20 April.

As is known, the Iranian regime's shelling of cities once again means this regime is violating one of the important principles according to which we stopped our bombing of Iranian cities.

We announce to international public the Iranian regime's crime and this blatant violation of the aforementioned principles. While doing so, we would like to announce that the Iranian rulers' persistence in this course will entitle Iraq to meet its obligations toward the lives and safety of its citizens, and also toward their property.

As a matter of fact, this will be a duty to be performed by Iraq. The Iranian rulers must understand this well and recollect their bitter past experience.

Hence, we strongly warn the Iranian regime against the consequences of persisting in this course which is represented by shelling our cities or violating any of the principles according to which we stopped our bombing of Iranian cities. The Iranian regime will be the loser and the party held responsible at the same time.

[Dated] 23 April 1988

Communique No 3,156

JN241720 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,156 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 24 April]

[Text] Our units continued their activities last night and today as follows:

1. Our brave helicopter gunships flew 43 combat missions, inflicting more losses on enemy personnel and equipment. Then they returned safely to their bases, God be praised.

2. Two scoundrels were killed, four ammunition dumps were blown up, two machineguns were destroyed and their crew killed, and one large vehicle was burned in the I Army Corps northern sector.

3. Two infantry positions and one observation post were destroyed and one ammunition dump was blown up in the II Army Corps central sector.

4. Two ammunition dumps were blown up in the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah and three other ammunition dumps were blown up in the IV Army Corps sector east of Maysan.

5. On the VII Army Corps front, the following losses were inflicted on the enemy east of Shatt al-'Arab: Two boats were destroyed, five infantry positions were destroyed, one shovel [preceding word in English] was destroyed, three vehicles were burned, one observation post was destroyed, and two ammunition dumps were blown up.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 24 April

Demjanjuk Receives Death Sentence for War Crimes
TA251356 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] This afternoon, the special court in Jerusalem sentenced John Demjanjuk to death. We are satisfied that he is Ivan the Terrible, a man who killed tens of thousands of people and who tortured them brutally and ruthlessly.

Not even a thousand deaths could exculpate him, Justice Tzvi Tal read out. In the sentence, the court ruled that after having found Demjanjuk guilty of crimes against the Jewish people, against humanity, against persecuted people, and of committing war crimes, the law stipulates that a death sentence be handed down.

The court rejected the arguments that nearly 50 years have elapsed since the defendant committed his horrendous crimes and that he has since begun a new chapter in his life, far from the scene of his crimes, building a home and raising a family.

Although one can be absolved and forgiven for most crimes in the world, the exception to this rule is crimes against the Jewish people and humanity. These can never be forgiven, neither by law nor in the heart.

These crimes transcend time, as though Treblinka still exists, as though the blood of Jews from shtetl after shtetl still boils in the pits, like the Prophet Zacharias' blood.

There stands Ivan the Terrible still, poisoning, stabbing, unyielding to the young and the elderly, merciless.

There stands the breast slasher, the stomach ripper, the driller of living flesh.

We therefore sentence him to death, said the court.

Dov Levin, the president of the court, added that the defendant has the right to appeal the sentence and in fact is obligated to do so because at issue is the death penalty.

Our correspondent Mikha'el Miro reports that a short time ago, Demjanjuk was taken away from Jerusalem's Binyeney Ha'ooma conference hall under heavy police protection. The policemen prevented the huge crowd waiting in the plaza in front of the conference hall from assaulting Demjanjuk. Demjanjuk called out in English: I am innocent!

Speculation on Possible Shevardnadze Visit

Meridor Relays Invitation
TA251025 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 25 Apr 88 p 2

[Report by Ilan Kfir, Drora Perl, and Nitzan Horowitz]

[Excerpts] Yesterday King Husayn officially abandoned the commitment he had made to Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and to the U.S. Administration to participate in direct negotiations with Israel at the head of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

In an interview with NBC television at his palace in Amman, the king said he is no longer able to represent the Palestinians in political negotiations, and that they will have to be their own representatives. [passage omitted]

The interview disappointed Secretary of State George Shultz, who had expected that the king would stand by the London document which he had signed with Peres.

Sources in Peres' office believe, however, that the king's remarks should not be construed as a renunciation of policies agreed upon in that document.

In the meantime, it has been learned that Knesset Member [MK] Dan Meridor, a Shamir confidant, met in Vienna several days ago with a senior Soviet official, through whom he extended an invitation to Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to visit Israel during his tour of the region.

Meridor's mission had been to look into the possibility of a dramatic U.S.-Soviet move: the invitation of King Husayn and Shamir to Moscow during the Gorbachev-Reagan summit meeting scheduled for May.

Senior political sources have confirmed that Meridor's mission was indeed related to the Soviet issue. [passage omitted]

Visit 'Not Ruled Out'
TA221750 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1715 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Report by political correspondent Yig'al Goren]

[Text] A secret report completed on the eve of Independence Day, drawn up by Soviet experts in the prime minister's office, predicts that a direct appeal to Israel may be coming as part of the Soviet Union's contacts in the Middle East.

This may happen even during Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's upcoming visit to the region. The possibility that he may even visit Israel is not being ruled out.

According to the report, it is believed that the Soviet Union will soon embark on intense activity in the Middle East. Thus, Israel will encounter a new phase in the quality of its relations with the Soviet Union.

The report notes that a novel Soviet initiative to promote the peace process, through cooperation with the United States, is being consolidated. It will involve a change in the known modes of maintaining a dialogue with Israel resulting from the realization that it is necessary to have direct contacts with us.

The report is based on contacts held recently between the Soviet Union, the PLO, and the Arab countries, and notes a steady process of rapprochement between the Soviet Union and Israel.

It also points out that at the same time, the Arabs are being presented with firm demands for greater flexibility. Likewise, the Soviet Union is seen to be constantly shifting away from its traditional stands.

It should be pointed out that the report was drawn up by a team of Soviet experts in the prime minister's office, who based their document on open and classified material on the Soviet Union's moves.

Meanwhile, the political talks between Secretary Shultz and top Soviet leaders in Moscow are continuing. So far, the U.S. secretary of state said, no agreement has been reached on the international conference.

Senior U.S. sources said this evening that no conclusion should be inferred from this, since the talks in Moscow are scheduled to continue for 2 more days.

Israel is following the talks in Moscow closely, because their results may have a crucial impact on the future of the U.S. peace initiative.

No 'Soviet Plans' for Visit

LD222317 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1943 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] Moscow, April 22 (TANJUG)—Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze told tonight's Moscow news conference that there were no Soviet plans for his visit to Israel.

The news conference was held over U.S. State Secretary George Shultz's visit to Moscow.

The Soviet Union and Israel do not have diplomatic relations and Israel knows what conditions have to be reached for the visit, Shevardnadze said.

'Growing Flexibility' Seen in Soviet Peace Stand

TA241626 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The Soviet foreign minister has told Swedish diplomats that his country will establish diplomatic ties with Israel when the latter accepts the idea of an international conference, even before that conference is held. Minister Shevardnadze said this a few days ago in a meeting with Swedish diplomats in Moscow.

Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that the Soviet minister also expressed readiness to cooperate with the United States in promoting the peace process in the Middle East.

The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem has told our correspondent that this is an indication of growing flexibility in the Soviet stand.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said that the Soviet Union continues to pursue its policy of disregarding Israel. Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that in a meeting of the Herut Central Committee, the prime minister said he hopes the Soviet Union will change its attitude toward Israel and the Jewish people. He added that diplomatic relations are not a prize or a gift.

Tamir To Hold 'Clandestine Talks' With Soviets

TA251035 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 25 Apr p 11

[Report by Orli Azulay-Katz]

[Text] Foreign Ministry Director General Avraham Tamir will leave tomorrow on a 1-week tour of Europe.

Tamir will leave for Brussels, where he is to participate in the EEC meetings. Afterward he will apparently hold clandestine talks with Soviet and Egyptian representatives in order to promote the Shultz plan.

The prime minister's office has not been briefed on the talks planned for Tamir in Europe.

Shamir: No Surprise in 'Arafat-Al-Asad 'Romance'

TA251105 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1005 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has said that the rapprochement between 'Arafat and Al-Asad heralds further radicalization on the part of the Arabs against Israel.

Mr Shamir once again accused King Husayn of thwarting negotiations in our region. He also noted that the journalists who violated censorship regulations and relayed information about the liquidation of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] must be punished. The prime minister was the guest of the Galilee town of Yesud Hama'ala this morning. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports:

[Begin recording] [Hecht] The blooming romance between 'Arafat and Al-Asad does not surprise Israel, the prime minister said, and what is more, I do not see any great difference between the two men.

[Shamir] It should be pointed out that increasing numbers of Arab elements in the region have recently been drawn to Syria, the most radical Arab country. It would seem that Arab radicalism is currently a popular legal tender in the Middle East. Husayn is trying very hard to get closer to Syria, and 'Arafat is now following suit. I do not know who will be the next in line.

[Hecht] The prime minister rejected King Husayn's charges that Israel's stubbornness will lead the Middle East to a nuclear disaster as nonsense.

[Shamir] I think we are doing everything for the cause of peace, while Husayn is one of the obstacles to peace.

[Hecht] Mr Prime Minister, yesterday you stated at the Herut Central Committee session that Israel will not give up Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District. At the same time, you say that Husayn does not want to come to negotiations. With all due respect, are you not contradicting yourself?

[Shamir] What contradiction are you talking about? Are we taking or have we ever taken anything away from Husayn? Did he inherit Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza from his grandmother? We are prepared to enter negotiations, both with Husayn and with the Arabs of Eretz Yisra'el known as Palestinians.

[Hecht] The prime minister believes that punitive measures should be taken against U.S. journalists who reported on Abu Jihad's murder by violating censorship regulations.

Their expulsion from Israel may not be the appropriate punishment, Shamir said, but they must be punished in order to terminate this shameful phenomenon. And what about those who leaked the information to them?

This is a national plague, the prime minister said, a plague which is very hard to deal with in a democratic regime. [end recording]

Syria 'Important Factor' in Peace Process

TA250501 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0400 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Speaking at a meeting of the Shinuy Party in Haifa last night, East Jerusalem newspaper editor Hanna Sinyurah said that the killing of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] has made it difficult for the Palestinians to talk about coexistence. After his address, reporter Vivien Roysten asked him for his assessment of the possible meeting between Yasir 'Arafat and Syrian President al-Asad.

[Begin recording] [Sinyurah] In the Palestinian camp, in order to bring the Palestinian issue forward in the international scene, we need also the backing of all the Arab countries.

Syria is an important factor in the peace process, because Syria is part of a comprehensive peace settlement. A Palestinian-Syrian cooperation will be essential in bringing forward the peace process, and in this way, bringing all the Arab countries to sit together and have a united front.

[Roysten] What about the assassination of Abu Jihad? How is that likely to affect the PLO policy?

[Sinyurah] At the moment, the political assassination and actual killing of Abu Jihad has made it very difficult for the Palestinians to talk about coexistence, and probably if I was not able to come today—and I was really thinking seriously of not coming to this meeting—it was because of the after effects of the killing of Abu Jihad.

How can I come here and talk about peace and coexistence, while I hear from the Israelis that the only way to solve the Palestinian issue is either to rub out Palestinian leaders or to use repressive measures like we have seen in the past few days in the territories. [end recording]

Fatah Sidon Broadcasts To Territories Prevented

TA221917 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] A pro-Syrian militia in Lebanon claims to have prevented the establishment of a Fatah broadcasting station that was going to broadcast from Lebanon to the territories held by Israel.

The members of the militia, which is called the Popular Liberation Army, reported that Fatah had already begun building the station in the port of Sidon, which is under their control, without prior coordination.

'Terrorist' Killed in Boat Destroyed Off Sidon

TA251245 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] A Navy boat on a routine patrol off the Lebanese coast last night identified a small terrorist vessel. The Navy boat opened fire, destroying the terrorist boat. The incident occurred off the coast of Sidon. The boat was apparently manned by only one terrorist, who was killed in the incident.

Air Force Chief on Danger of Stingers in Lebanon

TA231904 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Major General Avihu Bin-Nun, the air force commander, says that U.S. Stinger-type SAM's may reach Lebanon. These missiles have made their way from Pakistan to the rebels in Afghanistan, and from there to Iran. Our army affairs correspondent Moshe Shlonsky reports that the IDF fears these missiles may reach Hizballah forces in the Lebanese Al-Biqa', thus harming the air force's freedom of action in this region.

In an interview with the Air Force journal, the Air Force commander also said: The use of missiles against the citizens of Israel will trigger a much graver reaction.

Everybody in the Middle East should know this. Israel is developing means of defense against missiles after they have been launched, namely, the possibility of intercepting them in flight.

Maj Gen Bin-Nun added that the low-flying Tornado aircraft possessed by Saudi Arabia pose a much greater operational risk for Israel than the other threats.

IDF To Set Up 'Police Force' in S. Lebanon

TA241915 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The IDF intends to set up a local gendarmerie in southern Lebanon which for all intents and purposes will serve as a police force. Our correspondent in the north Moti 'Eden reports that the Israel police designated three senior officers for this job. They will handle training.

Egyptians Absent From Embassy Reception in Cairo

TA221450 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 22 Apr 88 p 6

[Report from Cairo by Smadar Peri]

[Text] Yesterday, a tradition that has prevailed since the signing of the peace agreement was broken for the first time. Every year a personal representative on behalf of the Egyptian president would participate in the Independence Day reception held at the residence of the Israeli ambassador to Cairo. This representative would bear the president's message to Israel and the embassy.

Yesterday was the first time since the opening of the embassy in Egypt that no presidential envoy arrived to sign the visitors' book. One of the manifestations of the deterioration in Israeli-Egyptian relations has been that Egyptian officials and Foreign Ministry staff voted with their feet.

Unlike the past, no Egyptian minister, or even Foreign Ministry official, showed up at the huge tent set up in the garden of the ambassador's residence in the Ma'adi neighborhood.

Conspicuous in their absence were the director of the Israel branch [of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry] and his deputy (the former consul general in Elat.)

The diplomats and Israeli Embassy staff in Cairo, who were tense before the first guest showed up, later showed clear signs of concern over the new state of affairs.

Many of them discussed a television program that was aired shortly before the reception in which an Egyptian professor explained how the "Zionist entity" came to be, and how the "empire of the Zionists who evicted 'the original Arabs'" was established in the land of Cana'an.

The special program, aired within the framework of the programs for high school students on the national channel, was shown on the anniversary of the declaration of the state.

The reception was attended by Western ambassadors and diplomats as well as by a large group of U.S. Embassy personnel led by the ambassador himself.

Many Egyptians apologized over the phone and announced that they could not afford to appear at an Israeli event, adding: "No doubt you can understand why." Other Egyptian guests explained their absence by saying: "We are afraid we might be noted down."

Sharon: Al-Wazir Death 'May Help Peace Process'

TA251338 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1005 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Minister Ari'el Sharon says there is no chance of attaining peace as long as the PLO is strongly active. In Sharon's opinion, not only does the death of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] not have a detrimental effect on Israel's relations with the Arab countries, but has even improved the chances for peace. Minister Sharon was visiting Kibbutz Ne'ot Mordekhay, and our correspondent Gabi Zohar spoke to him.

[Begin recording] [Zohar] Industry and Trade Minister Ari'el Sharon says that the economic problem created in Israel as a result of events in the territories is not the central problem today. The key problem Israel must tackle remains that of security in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District.

Minister Sharon categorically rejected King Husayn's remarks accusing Prime Minister Shamir of being an obstacle to peace.

[Sharon] I suggest we stop leading our lives according to what King Husayn or other Arab kings and leaders say, and start living according to Jewish needs. The issues we must concern ourselves with are first and foremost Jewish issues, not the Palestinian problem, or the Jordanian problem—which is also a Palestinian problem—or the problem of this or that Arab country. Our problems are Jewish ones.

[Zohar] Do you believe 'Arafat's visit to Syria, the resumption of the PLO's relations with Damascus, and Abu Jihad's assassination will change the PLO's attitude toward Israel, perhaps to an escalation and radicalization on its part?

[Sharon] There is no need whatsoever for any escalation and radicalization. This is a murderous organization whose hands are stained with Jewish and non-Jewish blood.

Their hands are perhaps the most tainted since the eradication of the Nazi regime in Germany. There is no tendency toward moderation in the Arab world, and certainly not in the PLO terrorist organizations.

There is only one objective, the annihilation of Israel and the Jews. Therefore, what happened in Tunis has no direct implications. On the contrary, I suppose that what happened may help the peace process.

I am sure the Arab countries feel relieved each time one of these arch-murderers disappears from the scene. One must understand that a peace process does not stand a chance as long as the PLO is active and strong.

Hence, all those who thought that Abu Jihad's disappearance from the arena would adversely affect relations between Israel and the Arab countries were proven wrong and simply failed to read the situation properly.

[Zohar] Minister Ari'el Sharon toured industrial plants in Kibbutz Ne'ot Mordekhay and in Qiryat Shemona. [end recording]

Commentary Analyzes Motive of Al-Wazir Killing

TA221046 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
22 Apr 88 p B1

[Commentary by Ze'ev Schiff: "A Change in the Rules of the Game"]

[Text] The question of whether Israel is responsible for the killing of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] will remain open for a long time. But it makes no difference as far as the Palestinians are concerned.

They are absolutely certain that Israel is responsible for the act, and so are foreign commentators. One of the latter told me that had Arabs been responsible for the murder, his wife and children would not have been spared.

When the son of Sulayman Franjiyah was murdered in Lebanon, the murderers also raped his wife to shame her and then they killed her and her children. This time it was different and the Arabs are aware of this.

It is not our intention to confirm or deny this claim, but Abu Jihad's killing forces us to consider the question of whether under the present circumstances this act will benefit or harm Israel?

Even if we are convinced that Abu Jihad deserved a thousand deaths, it is hard not to regard the incident with mixed feelings—this has always been Israel's attitude toward the assassination of enemy leaders, including PLO leaders.

The fact is that despite the bloody war and even though the PLO has been declared a terror organization, Israel—both under the Alignment and Likud governments—has not launched an ongoing campaign to annihilate the PLO leadership.

This was the rule, but there have been exceptions to the rule. In April 1973 Israel sent a commando force to kill three PLO and Fatah leaders in their apartments in Beirut.

Two of the victims were operations men, among them Muhammad Najar, 'Arafat's deputy. The third victim, Kamal Nasir, was the Fatah spokesman. In the Lebanon war, during the siege on Beirut, it was clear that attempts were being made to hit 'Arafat, but they proved unsuccessful.

When 'Arafat and his men agreed to evacuate Beirut, Israel was forced to promise the Americans not to hit those withdrawing. The rules of the game changed and Begin himself did not approve a hit on 'Arafat, even when he was within the shooting range of an Israeli sniper during the evacuation.

Through the years, it looked as though there was a silent agreement between the sides not to hit senior leaders, a sort of unwritten immunity for the top leaders. Some will maintain that only the Israeli side kept to these rules, and that the other side did not hit Israeli leaders because it was incapable of doing so.

I believe this is not true. They have not made many unsuccessful attempts. During recent years there have been very few attempts on Israeli leaders.

From what foreign publications have to say, operations people—those who send out killers and are directly involved in terror—were not included in this understanding. Occasionally operations people found their end in various ways.

Abu Jihad has always been considered an operations man, because he headed the PLO's military establishment and was directly involved in terror acts in which many Israelis—most of them citizens—have died.

He was one of those who lived by the sword and died by the sword. Had it been possible to kill him after the murder of 35 civilians during the attack on the bus on the coastal highway, it would have been done willingly as far back as 10 years ago.

He was also directly involved in the attempt to land 28 terrorists (from the vessel "Atibrius") who were ordered to storm the Defense Ministry and to reach Defense Minister Rabin's office. Whoever plans such acts should not be surprised that the other side might contemplate killing him.

Despite his growing power and position as a possible heir to 'Arafat, he was not a political leader such as Khalid al-Hasan or even Faruq Qaddumi. He belonged more to the operational group, to people like Ahmad Jibril or Abu al-Tayyib [Mahmud al-Natur], commander of Force 17.

These people have turned themselves into legitimate targets for attack. Despite the fact that Abu Jihad was rightly considered a pragmatist, this could not shield him, considering that he planned the recent bus hijacking in which three civilians were killed and has recently sent more and more murder squads across Israeli borders.

Recent circumstances have only added to this situation. The intifadha [uprising in Arabic] has changed some of the rules in various areas, from the scope of administrative detentions to the orders governing opening fire.

Previous prohibitions no longer hold. Israel feels it has lost some of its deterrent power and many Palestinians think Israel's reflexes have been deadened. At least, this was the case until the explosion of their "ship of return" in the port of Limassol. Now there is a feeling of all-out war.

The assassination of the PLO's top military man undoubtedly harms the morale of the Palestinians both in the occupied territories and abroad, despite the fact that Abu Jihad did not himself initiate the uprising.

This act demonstrates to many Palestinians in the territories that not only is the PLO leadership incapable of conducting the armed struggle and of leading the uprising, but that it cannot even protect itself and the organization's No 2 man.

No less significant is the terrorists' feeling that their leadership has been infiltrated by Israeli intelligence agents. How else did the attackers know—as several Fatah leaders are saying now—exactly what was happening in Abu Jihad's house?

There is also another side to the coin, however, and this is what causes the mixed feelings in such a case. Abu Jihad's assassination is causing a further escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—one in which the Palestinians will have to concentrate their efforts on hitting Israeli leaders at all costs. Such an escalation will bring more extremist elements to the top of the organization.

An escalation is not always a negative thing—if it is meant to bring about a dialogue in its wake. This, however, is not the case at present. Given our present political situation, it can be safely assumed that some people in Israel are satisfied with Abu Jihad's assassination because, among other things, it can further block the chances of a dialogue by forcing the other side to become more extremist. This, then, is a negative form of escalation which will exacerbate the war and deepen the rift.

The danger in the prolonged struggle between us and the Palestinians stems, among other things, from the fact that military operations, particularly when they are astonishingly successful, gradually turn into a substitute for policy.

Instead of serving the policy and enhancing the dialogue and the political solution, as they were designed to do, they turn into an end in themselves. This has happened to us more than once.

If we are so successful in our operations, why should we be afraid of the difficulties involved in repressing the recurrent waves of the intifadha?

This line of reasoning is what lies behind the reservations, even when we are speaking about the assassination of the head of the PLO's military apparatus.

Jordan, PLO Authorize Ex-Mayor To Resume Office

TA241055 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 24 Apr 88 p 2

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari]

[Text] The Jordanian Government and the PLO office in Amman have authorized a former mayor of Nabulus to return to office. He would replace Hafiz Tuqan who wishes to resign. Nabulus dignitaries went to Amman regarding this matter and returned with this approval.

If the PLO persists in this position, it would mean a drastic change in the policy it has been stating in its leaflets. The leaflets have been calling for the resignation of all the mayors now in office.

Commentator Praises Kuwait's Stand on Hijacking

JN241710 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1437 GMT 24 Apr 88

["Observation" by 'Izra Shirazi]

[Text] Dear listeners: A week ago, when the life of the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner's passengers and crew were threatened, we said in this program that the Kuwaiti stand which did not yield to the terrorist hijackers is a principled stand that deserves respect, encouragement, and appreciation.

Now that the terrorists themselves surrendered and released the passengers and crew of the civilian airliner last weekend, the size of respect and appreciation to the Kuwaiti Government and people has redoubled, regardless of the reservations about the Algerian Government's releasing the terrorist hijackers.

It is certain that Kuwait's rulers, despite the fact that Kuwait is a relatively small country, showed wisdom and cleverness, not only in handling the hijacking, but also in combating terrorism and terrorists.

The Kuwaiti Government was firm in its determination not to yield to the terrorists' demands despite their threats, some of which were carried out. Undoubtedly, this principled stand must be an example that should be

followed by all countries, big and small, if the international community wants to eradicate terrorism and fight international terrorism in all its ugly forms and abhorrent manifestations.

Through its firm stand, the Kuwaiti Government has given additional decisive evidence that the correct and most useful way to combat terrorists is not to yield to their terrorist threats and blackmail regardless of the cost and sacrifice.

Surrender to terrorists is a clear prescription to encourage, reward, and increase terrorism. It is true that non-surrender to terrorism may result, in the short term, in human victims. But governments must concentrate on long-term considerations in the combat against terrorism.

If we say that Kuwait's principled stand deserves respect and appreciation, and must be taken as a lesson by all governments, the lesson is two-sided for the Arab countries, and specifically those Arab countries whose governments shelter and promote terrorism, and those Arab countries whose media have been praising and encouraging the ugliest barbaric and inhuman crimes perpetrated by Arab terrorists against Israeli children, women, and defenseless citizens.

This two-sided lesson is that terrorism is a double-edged weapon, and the monster of terrorism is likely to turn against its keepers and promoters, sooner or later.

Shamir Views Shultz Plan, Unity With Alignment

TA241703 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1600 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir declared a short while ago that we will never be separated from Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. He claimed that we are thinking about Secretary of State Shultz' efforts very seriously, but at the same time the Camp David Accords were a tremendous concession for us.

Without mentioning it by name outright, the prime minister lambasted the Alignment at the Herut Central Committee meeting:

[Begin Shamir recording] Those defeatists, those of little faith who do not believe in the nation's strength and right, are constantly trying to inject a trickle of the poison of despair and threats of supposedly impending danger so that people's hearts will fill with fear, panic will spread, and the people will be prepared to endure any hardship only to save their lives. [end recording]

Our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel reports that Deputy Prime Minister David Levi said at the Herut Central Committee meeting that Israel must speak very clearly and openly with the U.S. Administration so that our moderation is not perceived as an attempt not to anger.

Minister Ari'el Sharon addressed the autonomy plan, saying that ways should be sought to divorce ourselves from this plan, which harbors great dangers.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1605 GMT on 24 April carries a report from the Tel Aviv fairgrounds, where the Herut Central Committee is meeting, adding that Prime Minister Shamir "called on the Americans to be persuaded to forgo the idea of the international conference." The report carries a recorded excerpt of Shamir's remarks about the Alignment: "Unity has been only partially successful recently because our partners violated the accord on unity. Therefore, we need national unity. It is needed objectively. Need I explain why? We are a small nation living in a tiny country, surrounded by hordes of enemies. We need unity, but this type of [word indistinct] will not be permitted any longer. We will no longer allow the unity agreement to be broken." Shamir also stressed the need for "internal unity within Herut ranks."]

Peres Criticizes Shamir Remarks on Territories

TA251125 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has criticized the prime minister's remarks. Mr Peres said that those who say that they object to an international conference and even go so far as to add that we do not intend to give up Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza cannot expect anyone to come to negotiations. Mr Peres was addressing high school students in Tel Aviv, and his remarks were reported by our correspondent Dan Eshel.

Labor Party Endorses Peres Election Platform

TA242020 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 24 apr 88

[Text] The Labor Party ministers held a special session today in which they endorsed a document formulated by party chairman Shim'on Peres. The document will be the Labor Party's political program and will be presented to the public in the election campaign.

The document states that the Labor Party will first strive to reach an interim arrangement through direct negotiations with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. These negotiations will be launched in an international conference.

The interim arrangement, which includes components from the autonomy plan, will last up to 5 years. The permanent solution will be based on Israel's security needs and on the necessity to guarantee its Jewish and democratic character.

Consequently, Israel will retain under its control areas not populated by Arabs that are vital for its security, and will hand over to Jordanian-Palestinian control areas populated by Arabs.

The Labor Party decrees that Israel will not go back to the 1967 borders, that no Palestinian state will be established, and that Jerusalem will remain united. Additionally, the Jordan River will remain the security border, not to be crossed by any foreign army. The Israeli settlements in the territories will remain where they are even after the permanent solution is reached. The territory that is to be transferred to Jordan will be demilitarized.

The document also stipulates that the Labor Party guarantees that the results of the negotiations over the interim arrangement and the permanent arrangement alike will be brought to the people to vote on either in a referendum or in elections.

Rabin 'Sharply' Attacks Sharir in Meeting

TA241132 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin sharply attacked Justice Minister Avraham Sharir and the state attorney's office at the cabinet meeting. Rabin claimed that the state prosecutor's office does not help the defense establishment enough on the issue of the deportation of inciters from the territories.

Minister Rabin said that in public the justice minister says that a stone is considered a weapon and that stonethrowers should be deported. But when the state attorney is asked for its stand on the issue the answer is negative.

Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that Acting Justice Minister Hayim Corfu supported the defense minister's stand, while Attorney General Mikha'el Harish said he could not give the defense minister, or anybody else, legal advice in contradiction to the rulings of the High Court of Justice or the Supreme Court.

During the cabinet meeting, Police Minister Hayim Bar-Lev reported on an increase in the number of disturbances last week and pointed out that most of them were in the Jerusalem area.

Rabin, Bar-Lev Brief Cabinet on Territories

TA241536 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Excerpt] The defense and police ministers today told the cabinet that the number of incidents in the territories and in Jerusalem following Abu Jihad's [Khalil al-Wazir] liquidation has increased. Our political correspondent 'Oz Frankel reports:

[Begin recording] The cabinet ministers were briefed today on the intifadha [uprising in Arabic] statistics: 4,900 detainees, including 1,700 administrative arrests; and 165 dead, including 147 killed by the security forces, the remainder victims of accidents, internal liquidations, and unsolved deaths.

Ministers Yitzhaq Rabin and Hayim Bar-Lev said that the number of incidents in the territories increased somewhat during the past week, following the killing of Abu Jihad.

The data are particularly striking in East Jerusalem: 66 incidents of rioting were recorded there during the recent week, reaching a peak last Friday. Minister Yitzhaq Rabin noted, however, that residents of the territories have on the whole not obeyed the detailed instructions of PLO leaflet No 14, published in the wake of Abu Jihad's liquidation. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Sharon Urges 'Breaking Away' From Autonomy Plan

TA241629 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Minister Ari'el Sharon says that autonomy should not be applied to certain territories. Therefore, the possibility of breaking away from the autonomy plan should be examined. Minister Sharon was speaking at the Herut Central Committee meeting in Tel Aviv.

More on Unrest, Related Incidents in Territories

IDF on Bani Suhaylah Death

TA221753 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1715 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] We have just received the following announcement from the IDF spokesman: Military sources have reported that according to an initial debriefing conducted in the Gaza Strip today, the youth who was killed in Bani Suhaylah was hurt while trying to run over soldiers patrolling the area.

Twelve Jabalyah residents were wounded by gunfire, one of them seriously. The soldiers fired because as the curfew was being violated, the soldiers stationed inside Jabalyah were faced with real danger.

Idnah Resident Killed 22 Apr

TA221815 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] A resident of the village of Idnah near Hebron was killed by gunfire after trying to attack a border police officer.

In the town of Bani Suhaylah in the Gaza Strip, a passenger in a car that tried to run over IDF soldiers on patrol was killed this afternoon. The soldiers on the patrol shot at the car. The body of the man was transferred to Al-Nasir Hospital in Khan Yunus but was later snatched.

The IDF spokesman in the Gaza Strip told our correspondent Moti Amir that in the Jabalyah refugee camp, the soldiers fired at rioters' feet. One of the rioters

sustained head injuries and was evacuated to Soroka Medical Center in Beersheba. Another 12 injured were transferred to local hospitals.

Our correspondent was told that the soldiers fired only after failing to impose the curfew in Jabalyah with tear gas and rubber bullets, and after realizing that their lives were in jeopardy.

Local riots in Gaza and the Al-Mughazi refugee camps were dispersed. The curfew on four Gaza Strip refugee camps, as well as on the town of 'Abasan and four neighborhoods in the Rafah refugee camp, are still in force. The blockade throughout the territories and the night curfew in the Gaza Strip are also still in effect.

Curfews, Blockades Continue

TA230934 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The blockades and curfews in the territories continue today. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that 400,000 inhabitants of the territories are under curfew—the residents of Nabulus and 'Anabta, as well as the inhabitants of 15 refugee camps in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

Youth Killed in Qabatiyah

TA231516 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Gunfire by border policemen killed a local resident in Qabatiyah in Samaria. Military sources told our correspondent Arye Gus that the youth had tried to attack one of the border policemen with an axe during a riot by dozens of residents. The family members took the body from Janin hospital and buried it.

Our correspondent reports that riots occurred in many places in Judaea and Samaria today, and processions were held to mark 1 week after the murder of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

The closure in the territories is continuing today. About 400,000 residents of the territories are subject to the curfew.

Residents Allowed Into Country

TA231845 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The military authorities this evening lifted the order banning the residents of the territories from leaving for Israel. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the decision was made in the wake of the relative quiet prevailing in the territories over the past few days.

The residents of the territories will be able to leave for Israel as of early tomorrow morning. Our correspondent adds that the military authorities are considering lifting additional restrictions imposed on the territories in the wake of the riots that erupted after the murder of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

Media Coverage 'Under Escort'

TA231624 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The security forces dispersed rioters in the Al-Mughazi refugee camp in Gaza, detaining two suspected of incitement. Molotov cocktails were thrown at IDF soldiers during the rioting, as our correspondent Moti Amir learned from a representative of the IDF spokesman.

A blockade is continuing in the territories today, and media coverage is allowed only if an IDF spokesman's representative is escorting.

Our correspondent reports that a general strike was staged in the Gaza Strip today. There were disturbances in several places, but there were no serious clashes with the security forces.

The commander of the Central Command has ordered 25 shopowners in East Jerusalem to open their businesses from 0800 to 1900. The orders were handed today to owners of shops near the Old City's Damascus Gate.

Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that the commander's order says that if the shopowners do not comply, their shops will be closed down.

Military Renews Fuel Supply

TA232011 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The military authorities in Judaea and Samaria have decided to renew the supply of fuel to gas stations in the territories. This move was decided upon in the wake of the relative calm prevailing over the last few days.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that in addition, the curfew and blockade in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza will be lifted as of tomorrow morning. The curfew will remain in effect on the Nur al-Shams refugee camp near Tulkarm and the village of 'Anabta on the Tulkarm-Nabulus road.

'Some' Restrictions Lifted

TA240452 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0400 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The military government in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza has lifted some of the restrictions on the Arab residents in the territories. This in light of the relative quiet recently.

The closing-off of the areas has ended, and this will allow the residents to go to jobs in Israel this morning. The military government has also decided to renew the supply of gasoline to service stations.

At the same time, curfews will remain in force in several refugee camps in the territories. In the Gaza Strip, the curfew has been lifted at the Jabalyah, Al-Shati', Khan Yunus, and Rafah camps and in the village of 'Abasan. The curfew will remain in force today at the Al-Nusayrat camp.

Arab residents of Judaea and Samaria are still being prevented from visiting the Gaza Strip and vice versa. The night curfew remains in effect throughout the Gaza Strip from 1900 in the evening until 0300 in the morning.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0400 GMT on 24 April adds that "Last week, the defense establishment allowed Ahmad al-Wazir, a cousin of Khalil al-Wazir, to attend the latter's funeral. He is due back in Gaza from Damascus this week. Our correspondent Moti Amir has learned that following major hesitations it was decided to comply with the request on humanitarian grounds and because the cousin is a 70-year-old man."]

Curfew on Al-Burayj

TA240811 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0800 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] A curfew was imposed on the Al-Burayj refugee camp in the Gaza Strip this morning in order to enable the security forces to demolish temporary buildings and other buildings put up illegally.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that what is called the clearing of the traffic axes is taking place in the camp, and the buildings aimed for destruction include one on the Al-Burayj-Al-Nusayrat crossroads.

Youth Killed in Hebron 22 Apr

TA241422 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] It was learned today that an Arab youth was killed by IDF gunfire on Friday in the Hebron District village of Bayt Ra's. This raises the number of fatalities on Friday and Saturday to four.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that on Friday afternoon a Molotov cocktail was thrown at an IDF unit that was passing through the village. One of the soldiers shot at the people who hurled the firebomb.

The hospital in Hebron reported yesterday that the body of a youth arrived from that village. The IDF is checking whether this is the body of the person who threw the Molotov cocktail.

Night Curfew on Qalqilyah

TA241710 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] A curfew was imposed on Qalqilyah this evening. It will be effective every night between 1800 and midnight. Military sources have told our correspondent Arye Gus that the decision to impose a curfew was reached in view of the fact that in the last few days, youths have started throwing stones at Israeli vehicles after the end of the daily Ramadan fast.

Our correspondent reports that the IDF distributed leaflets in Nabulus today, demanding that the population maintain order.

Restrictive ID Cards Issued

TA240721 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Apr 88 pp 1, 2

[Report by Joel Greenberg, Bradley Burston, and Andy Court]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Gaza residents reported last night that they had been issued new identity cards by Israeli authorities. The cards, with orange folders in place of the light green usually issued to Gazans, reportedly bear the inscription "Not valid for travel out of the Gaza Strip."

Local sources said that the cards had been issued primarily to Gazans recently arrested for disturbance-related offences. [passage omitted]

Jerusalem Shops Ordered Closed

TA241318 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Jerusalem policemen handed out closure orders to 25 East Jerusalem shopowners about an hour ago. Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that the decrees, which were signed by Major General 'Amram Mitzna', commander of the Central Command, instruct the shopowners to close their shops daily between 1400 and 1900 beginning tomorrow. The decrees will be effective indefinitely.

Several businessmen have told our correspondent that they have no intention of abiding by the decrees. It was said in Jerusalem that whoever violates the instruction will be tried and could face a sentence of up to 2 years in jail.

Tulkarm Shops Forced To Close

TA241424 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Several Tulkarm shopowners tried to open their businesses this afternoon in accordance with the times specified by the Unified National Command of the Uprising.

An IDF unit arrived there and forced them to close their businesses. People who run mobile fruit and vegetable stalls were likewise asked to leave the area. [passage omitted]

14 Merchants Detained

TA251305 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] East Jerusalem shopowners who opened their stores indefiance of the decrees issued against them have been detained. Our police affairs correspondent Shlomi Stein reports from Jerusalem:

[Begin recording] Fourteen merchants with businesses near Damascus Gate opened their shops this morning when shops were to have remained closed. As though perfectly synchronized, at precisely 1400 the 14 shops opened according to the instructions of the intifadha [uprising in Arabic] command.

Hundreds of Arabs gathered in the plaza in front of the shops. The police blocked traffic on all the nearby streets and rushed hundreds of police and border policemen as well as water cannon to the area.

All of a sudden, a convoy of mounted police arrived, galloping straight into the midst of the crowd, driving it away.

The 14 businessmen were detained one by one. Their shops were locked and they were put on a special police bus that drove them to police headquarters in the Russian compound. Four additional shopowners received orders to close their shops today.

Let us point out that only 14 businessmen opened their shops today, out of the 20 who received the closure orders yesterday. Charges will be filed against the detainees in the next few days, and they can face a jail term of up to 2 years. [end recording]

All Gaza Curfews Lifted 25 Apr

TA250440 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0400 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Security forces lifted the curfew from the Al-Nusayrat and Al-Burayj refugee camps in the Gaza Strip this morning. All curfews imposed on Gaza have now been lifted. The Strip was reported quiet last night, and this morning most workers left for their jobs in Israel. More from reporter Steve Rodan:

[Begin recording] [Rodan] One week after the death of PLO terror leader Khalil al-Wazir, the low-key mourning continues in the Gaza Strip, but the PLO calls for violence by Arabs in the Strip have been largely unobserved.

In fact, some prominent Palestinians acknowledge that the opposite has been the case. One of them is Gaza lawyer Fayiz Abu Rahmah.

[Abu Rahmah] The lifting of these restrictions helped a lot to normalize things, and I believe that minimizing the use of these excessive means may well normalize things more than not.

[Rodan] Abu Rahmah was a cousin of Khalil al-Wazir, and he, along with the rest of his family, mourned Abu Jihad's [Khalil al-Wazir] assassination. Still, he stresses, he did not support Abu Jihad's violent means.

On another matter, Abu Rahmah says that he and other Gaza lawyers are continuing to refuse to enter Israeli military courts. However, these lawyers are requesting to visit Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons. [end recording]

Tear Gas Victim Dies 24 Apr

TA251135 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 25 Apr 88 pp 1, 8

[Report by Andy Court, Bradley Burston, Menahem Shalev, and Joel Greenberg]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Military sources yesterday appeared to confirm Palestinian reports that a man died after being shot by troops at the village of Bayt al-Rawsh in the Hebron area. The sources said that in a clash on Friday, troops opened fire at a man hurling a petrol bomb.

Palestinian sources said the man was shot on Saturday, and identified him as Ahmad Amir, 22.

The Palestinian sources also reported that a 60-year-old-woman, Na'ima al-'Alami, from the village of Bayt Immar north of Hebron, died of tear-gas inhalation after a clash yesterday. Military sources denied the report and said the woman died of natural causes. [passage omitted]

Suspended Sentence for Beating

TA241355 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] A short while ago, the Yafo military tribunal passed a 5-month sentence suspended for 2 years on Corporal Sagi Harpaz, who was also demoted to private.

Corporal Sagi Harpaz was one of the three soldiers charged with the beating of Arabs in Nabulus in an incident filmed by a CBS television crew.

Our correspondent Gay Rolnik notes that Corporal Harpaz pleaded guilty to the charges. Due to the special circumstances in which the incident occurred, however, he was not sentenced to actual imprisonment.

Conciliatory Moves Considered

TA221727 Jerusalem Television Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Interview with Brigadier General Shay Erez, head of the Civilian Administration in Judaea and Samaria, by unidentified correspondent on 22 April; place not given; in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles—recorded]

[Text] [Erez] We constantly review our conduct with respect to the behavior of the local population and events in the territories. As a holiday gesture in view of the above, the commander of the Central Command has decided to release several dozen youths between 14 and 16 years of age who were involved in disturbances.

If it turns out that during Ramadan the situation in the area is similar to that which prevailed during the 2 weeks preceding Independence Day, and if we continue to see that calm is being restored, we will definitely consider additional moves aimed at making it easier for the population to return to normal life.

[Correspondent] What measures, specifically?

[Erez] For example, additional releases, the opening of various institutions that were subjected to pressure, allowing the introduction of money in return for exports, or anything else connected to the restoration of normal life for a civilian population.

[Correspondent] Gen Erez, the territories have been closed for several days now, and it is impossible to enter Israel from there. Curfews are in force on 15 refugee camps in Judaea and Samaria as well as in Nabulus, which is the largest town in the territories. How long will these curfews remain in effect?

[Erez] The curfew will continue until we are convinced that the populace will resume as regular and organized a way of life as possible from the moment the curfew is lifted.

We will not permit the locals to engage in disturbances as soon as the curfew is over. If we feel that the population will resume the kind of lifestyle we have seen over the past 2 weeks, we will lift the curfews.

But if we feel this is premature, the curfews will continue until we believe life will go back to how it was before.

No 'Change' in Bayta Probe

TA231721 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The report on the incidents in the village of Bayta has been submitted to 'Amram Mitzna', commander of the Central Command. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe says that the report prepared by the security forces and the police contains no substantive change compared to the initial investigation, which stated that Tirtza Porat was killed by an M-16 bullet.

The report also indicates that no bullets were fired from a Kalashnikov rifle toward the settlers. The report is now in the hands of the commander of the Central Command, who will review it and then submit it to the chief of staff.

Measures Against Foreign Correspondents Examined

TA231925 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The prime minister's office and that of the defense minister have lately been considering what measures to adopt against foreign correspondents who transmitted reports from Israel on the Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] affair while circumventing censorship.

Our army affairs correspondent Moshe Shlonsky says that in the opinion of military sources, this is one of the gravest cases of censorship violations in recent years, and that the possibility of determining the identity of the source of information is being examined as well.

Our correspondent adds that also under consideration is the withdrawal of one of the foreign correspondents' work permits. The practical meaning of such a move is the expulsion of this correspondent.

Editor of Closed Newspaper Detained 23 Apr

TA231937 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] This evening the police detained Roni Ben-Efrat of Jerusalem, a female editor of DEREKH HANITZOTZ [THE PATH OF THE SPARK], which was closed down 2 months ago.

Our correspondent reports she was detained by Ben-Gurion Airport police as she was about to leave for Italy at the head of a democratic youth delegation. The delegation was to participate in an anti-Fascist convention held annually in Italy.

Roni Ben-Efrat's husband, Ya'aqov, was detained about a week ago and was charged with security offenses. He rejected the charges. The Hanitzotz organization to which Roni Ben-Efrat belongs views her detention as a crude move intended to harm legitimate political activity, as yet another provocation against the people of this organization.

U.S. Hostages Threatened Over 'Aggression'

NC241604 Paris AFP in English 1601 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Beirut, April 24 (AFP)—The pro-Iranian Revolutionary Justice Organization threatened here Sunday to kill two American hostages it holds if the United States engages in "any new aggression" in the Gulf.

The Moslem fundamentalist group made the threat in three-point statement handwritten in Arabic and delivered to a Western news agency in the Lebanese capital.

The statement was accompanied by a photocopy of an identity document belonging to Edward Tracy, one of the two American hostages it has held for nearly 20 months.

Citing a "new rhythm of aggressions" by the United States, the statement went on to say the following.

"First: The aggressions in the Gulf will not remain unpunished and will not take place as easily as America— which thinks it can decide their beginning and their end— believes.

"Second: Our logical retaliation to the invasion of the region, to aggression and to the arrogance will make us take the fight to America itself and events will become uncontrollable.

"Any new aggression, whatever the pretext and the justifications, will lead to the execution of the spy Edward Tracy and (Joseph) Cicippio," the statement added.

"Let this announcement be considered as a serious appeal to set new rules for the game in the region," it concluded. [passage omitted]

Car Bomb Explodes at Tripoli Vegetable Market

NC230749 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0744 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] A booby-trapped car exploded at 0915 today in the Al-Tabbanah area [in Tripoli]. The explosion took place at the junction of the grain and vegetable markets. Security sources in the North report that there are many casualties and burned cars. Ambulances are now heading to the site to evacuate casualties.

45 Killed, 72 Wounded

NC230904 Paris AFP in English 0901 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, Lebanon, April 23 (AFP)—Forty-five people were killed on Saturday morning when a car bomb went off in a crowded vegetable market in this northern Lebanese port city, hospital sources said.

They said 72 others were wounded when a Mercedes Benz rigged with explosives blew up during the morning rush hour in the heavily-populated Al-Tabbanah neighborhood.

Correspondents at the scene said the blast had caused massive damage.

Syrian troops controlling the city since October 1985 immediately sealed off the area, the correspondents added.

Leaders Condemn Explosion

NC231432 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1345 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Excerpt] A responsible source in the Lebanese Forces has made the following statement: The explosion in Tripoli, which has killed many innocent people, has ushered in a new round of violence, which began in the South several days ago. This violence has expanded today and struck the capital of North Lebanon. Since the outbreak of the war, the Lebanese citizen has been paying the price in terms of his life and livelihood, as a result of the conflicts of the foreign forces in Lebanon. These conflicts have been at the expense of the Lebanese people. We urge all parties to halt this new round of violence because it has been proven, since the outset of war, that violence does not solve any problem in Lebanon.

Phalangist Party leader Dr George Sa'adah has condemned the explosion and called for a minimal political agreement. Such agreement, Sa'adah added, should free the country from the continuous pressure and save it from security impediments ahead of the deadlines [reference to forthcoming presidential elections], so that these elections may be conducted in a calm atmosphere.

For his part, Acting Prime Minister Salim al-Huss viewed what happened as a real massacre and called on everyone to work with all means to prevent further mass crimes.

According to the latest reports, 52 people have been killed and 125 others injured in the explosion. The injured were initially taken to Tripoli hospitals which, however, could not accommodate them. Consequently, many of them were moved to Batrun and Sayyidat Lubnan Hospitals in Juniyah, Al-Ma'unat Hospital in Jubayl, and Hotel Dieu. [passage omitted]

'Criminal Minds' Blamed

NC231519 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Excerpts] The Northern Coordination Committee will hold an emergency meeting in the office of lawyer 'Umar Karami, who is now in Moscow, to discuss the criminal explosion in Tripoli today. According to preliminary count, 50 persons were killed and 150 others were injured in the explosion. Meanwhile, rescue work is continuing this afternoon amid repeated calls for blood donations.

Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni has attributed the explosion to criminal minds. He has called on everyone to insist that every effort be exerted to

enable Lebanon and the Lebanese to emerge from the crisis and to restore an atmosphere of security and stability to Lebanon. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Dr 'Abdallah al-Rasi has emphasized that the security organs will do everything possible to find the perpetrator or perpetrators and those who are behind them. He pledged to furnish the public with all the information that is made available to these organs.

Nabih Birri, minister and leader of the Amal movement, has contacted Ma'an Karami and condemned the crime and enquired about the tragic consequences. He indicated that the Israeli hand has moved from Tunis and the Al-Aqsa Mosque and reached Tripoli today.

For his part, Maronite patriarch Nasrallah Butrus Sfayr has described the incident as a monstrous crime. He said that those with evil intentions have once again decided to utilize this despicable method in order to kill innocent people.

Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council, has called on the security organs concerned to apprehend the criminals and those who incited them to commit this crime.

Lebanese Forces Accused

NC231717 Beirut Domesic Service in Arabic
1630 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The Northern Coordination Committee held an emergency meeting under 'Ashir al-Dayah [mayor of Tripoli] this afternoon during which it discussed the dimensions of the massacre [caused by the Tripoli explosion]. Following the meetings it issued a statement accusing agents of the Lebanese Forces of carrying out the massacre.

The Committee appealed to the citizens to exercise greater vigilance, caution, and tenacity in order to frustrate the chances of the plotters. It also called on the official authorities to compensate the families of the victims as they had previously done in other areas. The Committee further called on the masses in Tripoli and the north to declare a general national mourning and to strike on Monday, 25 April.

President Expresses Sorrow

NC231813 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1715 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] President Amin al-Jumayyil has expressed his deep pain over today's massacre in Tripoli and noted his sorrow for the innocent victims who fell in that incident. The president strongly condemned this criminal act and other similar acts which surface whenever the Lebanese people take a step toward reconciliation and peace in their country.

President al-Jumayyil warned of the schemes which are being concocted against Lebanon and its people. He called on the people to face up to these schemes with awareness and a sense of national responsibility, particularly at the critical stage that Lebanon and the entire region is passing through now.

Death Toll Rises to 65

NC240657 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic
0530 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Excerpt] It was a black Saturday for the Lebanese in Tripoli yesterday. The incident there rocked all Lebanon. Leaders have described the incident as a massacre and called for vigilance. According to the latest report, 65 persons were killed and 125 others wounded. [passage omitted]

French Negotiating Team For Hostages in Beirut

NC221951 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1915 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] The Al-Anba' news agency [as heard] has reported that a private Swiss plane landed at Beirut Airport at 1720 today and took off again after three men and a blonde woman got off the plane. Escorted by Syrian special forces, the four persons left for an unknown destination using a civilian car. According to rumors spread in Beirut, the airplane conveyed the negotiators to settle the issue of the release of the three French hostages in Lebanon.

REUTER believes that Syrian businessman 'Imran Adham is among these negotiators. Citing top security sources, the agency reports that the aircraft was to have picked up the two French diplomats Marcel Carton and Marcel Fontaine and French journalist Jean-Paul Kauffmann. It quotes an Islamic security source as saying the deal has been concluded and the plane has arrived to transport the hostages, perhaps today.

'Specific Demands' Delay Release

NC230522 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
0415 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Journalists who have been waiting outside the Summerland Hotel since 2100 yesterday were asked early this morning to go to the reception hall in the hotel, where the French hostages are expected to be released. The Voice of Lebanon has learned that (Alexander Stefanie), head of the French negotiating team which arrived in Beirut last night, had told the kidnappers of the Frenchmen what the French Government could give in return for the release of the hostages. The kidnappers have insisted on specific demands. (Stefanie) had been in contact with the French Government, which was divided over fulfillment of the demands. This may have delayed the release of the hostages.

REUTER news agency has reported that the Swiss plane which landed at Beirut Airport yesterday evening is due to transport the hostages, Jean-Paul Kauffmann, Marcel Carton, and Marcel Fontaine.

Team Departs Without Hostages

NC231030 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1020 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Four rounds of negotiations and two round-trips between Beirut and Larnaca Airports have not resulted in the release of the French hostages in Lebanon. The Swiss plane which brought a French-Lebanese delegation led by (Marciani) to Lebanon yesterday left Beirut Airport before noon with the delegation aboard, but not the hostages. The plane had also left Beirut Airport last night with only the pilot. A Lebanese source said that the Falcon plane left today for Le Bourget Airport in Paris and is not carrying any of the hostages.

The negotiating team was surprised when the abductors insisted on certain demands, and it contacted the French Government, which was divided over fulfillment of the demands. It has been learned that one of the obstacles is that the abductors insist on releasing the hostages in Beirut, while the Syrians want the release in Damascus.

Al-Jummayil 'Personal Attack' on Syria's Al-Asad

NC251249 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] President Amin al-Jumayyil launched a campaign against Syria today which included a personal attack on President al-Asad. He alleged that Syria's plan was to annex Lebanon and that he had prevented this. Referring to the Syrian president, Al-Jumayyil said Hafiz al-Asad spent one night believing that he was a new 'Abd al-Nasir, an emperor of the Middle East, but woke up to find himself facing reality. The Syrian danger, Al-Jumayyil noted, will remain real. He continued: I will continue my term of office whatever happens. I wish to remain a public nuisance. Speaking to the newspaper LE JOURNAL DE DIMANCHE, Al-Jumayyil claimed he is not in conflict with anyone. He admitted that his escorts are incapable of ensuring full protection for him.

Alleged Statements Denied

NC251533 Beirut Domestic Service in English 1500 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Statements attributed to President al-Jumayyil have been flatly denied today. A special statement issued by the Directory General of the Presidential Affairs refers specifically to statements attributed in the French press yesterday to the president, which were quoted by Lebanese media today. The statement said that the president had made no press statements and had not been interviewed by the Paris newspaper involved during his recent visit to the French capital. The statements attributed to him had been gathered at a social function and were inaccurate and incomplete in many cases, and totally false and baseless in some others. Furthermore, the newspaper involved did not secure any permission to publish these reports, as is usually the case.

The Directory General reminded the media of the need to check statements and reports attributed to the president, especially those related to the interest of Lebanon on the Arab and international levels.

1 Killed in Israeli Raid on PFLD-GC Positions

NC222037 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] The Israeli raid on the PFLP-GC positions in Al-Shuf this afternoon left one person dead and seven others wounded. The wounded were taken to the Kamal Junblatt and Hammud Hospitals and the Juniyah Clinic.

Jannati Calls for Hizballah-Amal Reconciliation

LD231734 Tehran IRNA in English 1652 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Beirut, April 23, IRNA—The delegation led by a member of Iran's Council of Guardians Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati released its second statement here calling on the Amal movement and Lebanese Hizballah to bury the hatchet and close ranks.

The statement expressed deep concern over the recent "regrettable incidents" between Muslims in South Lebanon and requested all parties concerned to set aside their petty differences and unite against the Zionist regime along with their Muslim brothers in occupied Palestine.

At a time when Islam has become the target of its enemies, especially world arrogance and the Zionist regime, such internal disputes are regrettable, it added.

The statement proposed the setting-up of a 5-man committee composed of prominent Lebanese alim Allameh Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Shi'ite Assembly Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, leaders of Amal movement and Hizballah and Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam, to scrutinize the incidents.

The 10-point statement also announced that the Islamic Republic of Iran was dutybound to help Muslims fight the Zionist regime and spread Islamic uprising against oppressors.

The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue to give financial assistance to families of victims of the sad incidents and repair the damages inflicted due to the recent clashes, it concluded.

'Arafat Visits Damascus; Palestinian Talks Held

Fatah Delegation Meetings

JN241330 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Louis Faris report from Damascus]

[Text] Speculation increased in Damascus this afternoon on the possibility of Yasir 'Arafat's arrival in Damascus at any moment. However, no official source has commented on the matter. Up to the time of this newscast no one denied or firmly confirmed the report.

The delegation of Palestinian leaders is continuing its contacts in Damascus. It is coordinating with the Syrian leaders on supporting and developing the uprising in the occupied Arab territory on the basis of rejecting the attempts to abort the uprising, and rejecting in particular Secretary of State Shultz' initiative which offers nothing worth mentioning to the Palestinian people.

Palestinian meetings with the Fatah delegation continued today. Preparation for a Palestinian meeting that includes all factions was discussed.

At Faruq Qaddumi's residence, the Fatah delegation met with delegations from the PFLP, the DFLP, the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, and the Palestinian Communist Party. According to Palestinian sources, further meetings are scheduled to be held between the Fatah Central Committee delegation headed by Faruq Qaddumi and including Salim al-Za'nun, Hani al-Hasan, Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid, Abu Mahir Ghunaym [Muhammad Ratib Ghunaym], and Rafiq al-Natshah—that is, 6 of the Fatah Central Committee's 10 members—and the Syrian leaders to resume discussion of any outstanding issues.

DFLP leader Nayif Hawatimah, who is in Damascus together with several members of the DFLP Political Bureau, is exerting intensive efforts. He described the Palestinian leadership's decision to bury the late Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, in Damascus as a strategic and political decision. Hawatimah says he expects the other members of the Fatah Central Committee, including Yasir 'Arafat, to arrive in Damascus soon. Hawatimah says Syria has informed all the Palestinian leaders that the doors of Damascus are opened to everyone.

Hawatimah believes conditions are now favorable for building bridges of relations between Syria and the PLO with the aim of adopting a joint policy to develop the uprising and to confront Shultz' plan, because such coordination constitutes a response to the latest U.S.-Israeli memorandum of understanding.

Referring to the memorandum the Damascus radio commentator says no state has tied its foreign policy in any part of the world to the will of a foreign quarter in the same way the United States has tied its Middle East policy to the will of Israeli rulers, thus divesting the United States of all possibilities of working for peace. The commentator says the new memorandum of understanding constitutes a new U.S. declaration on standing alongside Israeli occupation. He holds the U.S. Administration fully responsible for all Israel's criminal actions.

Khaddam, PNSF Group Meet

JN250803 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] A meeting was held last night between Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and a delegation from the PNSF, which opposes the PLO leadership.

The delegation consisted of the Front President Khalid al-Fahum; Ahmad Jibril and Talal Naji for the PFLP-GC; 'Isam al-Qadi and Muhammad Khalifah for Al-Sa'iqah; Abu Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha] and Abu Khalid al-'Amlah for the Fatah opposition; and former PLO Executive Committee member 'Abd al-Muhsin Abu Mayzar.

It is believed that the meeting dealt with the issues which will form the basis for renewed relations between Syria and the PLO leadership. These are supporting the popular uprising in the occupied territories, rejecting plans for interim and separate solutions for the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the new U.S. plan brought to the region by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, and affirming the need for a just and comprehensive solution within the framework of an effective international conference to be held under UN auspices with the participation of all parties concerned with a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

Further on Meetings

JN251339 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Louis Faris report from Damascus]

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received today Mustafa al-Kharrubi, the Libyan envoy, who arrived in Damascus yesterday with Yasir 'Arafat. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam. They discussed Arab relations and issues of mutual interest.

At night Al-Kharrubi received PFLP leaders and according to a PFLP source they discussed Palestinian-Syrian relations. The PFLP source asserted that George Habash is making efforts to revive the Syrian-Palestinian alliance.

The Palestinian leaders met at Yasir 'Arafat's residence in Al-Rawdah Palace last night. The meeting was attended by 8 of the 10 Fatah Central Committee members and leaders of the PFLP, the DFLP, the Palestine Liberation Front, and the Palestinian Communist Party. The meeting was resumed this morning. After

the meeting George Habash announced to journalists that the atmosphere is extremely positive. He said: We expect to meet with President Hafiz al-Asad this evening.

Nayif Hawatimah said: We expect a meeting with Al-Asad at any time. We are full of hope that all issues will be resolved in a positive spirit. It is a great gift to the uprising.

In a statement to our radio Nayif Hawatimah said: Yesterday evening we reviewed what the Palestinian delegation accomplished in Damascus. 'Arafat and Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] reviewed their meetings with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and President Chadli Bendjedid. The Palestinian leaders were very satisfied by the review.

Before noon today a lengthy discussion was held during which the view was formed that the uprising offers a wide area for agreement with Syria and that the bases for supporting the uprising center on the Syrian-Palestinian alliance, bringing Jordan on the side of that alliance, and resolving all outstanding issues connected with the Palestinian presence in Lebanon. Hawatimah said: What we want is merely the protection of the Palestinian presence and the right to fight the enemy. The Palestinian leaders also approved joint Syrian-Palestinian coordination for the forthcoming Algiers summit and for confronting George Shultz' plan.

Referring to the dialogue with the PNSF leaders, Nayif Hawatimah said: The Palestinian leaders are anxious that all the PLO factions participate in the dialogue. Hands are extended to hold direct and immediate dialogue with the PNSF leaders and Khalid al-Fahum to attain a political agreement opening the way to convening a new PNC session as soon as possible. With regard to the question of Egypt the solution is exactly that approved by the Algiers summit, particularly as the Syrian and Palestinian leaders agree on the need to contain and topple the Camp David policy and to besiege the U.S. initiative.

'Arafat Arrives 24 Apr

JN241638 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1610 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Damascus, 24 Apr (SANA)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Damascus at 1815 today. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Comrade Sa'id Hammadi, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command; Dr Muhammad Harbah, interior minister; Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid, member of the Fatah Central Committee; Mahmud al-Khalidi, director of the PLO office in Damascus; and the official in charge of the Libyan relations office in Damascus. Salah Khalaf, alias Abu Iyad, member of the Fatah Central Committee, is accompanying 'Arafat.

'Arafat, Hawatimah Statements

JN241836 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived at Damascus International Airport aboard a private plane. He was received at the airport by Sa'id Hammadi, member of the ruling Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command; and Muhammad Harbah, Syrian interior minister. He was also received by Palestinian leaders led by Faruq Qaddumi and Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid.

Upon arrival 'Arafat went to the martyr's cemetery in the Al-Yarmuk refugee camp. He recited verses from the Koran in memory of the late martyr Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, who was buried in Damascus last Wednesday. It is the first time Yasir 'Arafat has set foot on Syrian territory since he was expelled by the Syrian leaders 5 years ago.

'Arafat was accompanied on the plane to Damascus by Salah Khalaf, alias Abu Iyad, Fatah Central Committee member, and Brigadier General Abu Bakr Yunus, commander of the Libyan Armed Forces.

At the martyr's cemetery we asked Yasir 'Arafat about his feelings on returning to Damascus after a long absence and on the possibility of his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad. He replied: I feel I am returning to my dear brothers and comrades-in-arms. We shall march together, God willing, until the flag of our Arab nation is hoisted upon Jerusalem's minarets, churches, and walls. Yasir 'Arafat also paid tribute to the uprising in the occupied Arab territory. He expressed the hope of meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

In the Al-Yarmuk camp Palestinians spontaneously gathered around the procession. In a few minutes more than 30,000 gathered. They raised the black Buick provided by the Syrian Protocol Department to Yasir 'Arafat with their hands shoulder high and chanted enthusiastically.

In a statement to our radio DFLP leader Nayif Hawatimah, who made efforts to reconcile the Palestinian and Syrian leaders, said: Conditions are favorable for normalizing relations between Syria and the PLO. 'Arafat's visit to Syria is one of the results of the efforts of the Palestinian delegation that arrived in Damascus accompanying the body of the late Khalil al-Wazir.

Hawatimah added: Now that all the Palestinian leaders are in Damascus we will begin to discuss in depth and in detail relations between Syria and the PLO on the basis of the Algiers conference. This conference provided correct answers with regard to Syria and laid down the political conditions for any relationship with Egypt on the basis of the resolutions of the 16th PNC session and Arab summit resolutions. These resolutions affirm there

should be no political relations with Egypt as long as Egypt is shackled by the Camp David accords. That is the main outstanding issue dividing Syria and Fatah.

Hawatimah continued: The question of the Palestinian presence in Lebanon will not be an issue of contention with the Syrian brothers, and Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam has assured us of that.

Hawatimah added: There will be no differences over the need to strengthen national unity with the participation of the factions that did not take part in the Algiers PNC session. The major issues that will be discussed with the Syrian leaders revolve around three topics: The popular uprising and ways of supporting it politically and materially; besieging the Shultz plan; and raising the tempo of effective Arab solidarity at the forthcoming emergency [Arab] summit in Algiers, and presenting to the summit a Syrian-Palestinian joint working paper on all issues connected with the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question.

In conclusion Hawatimah said: From past experience we know that whenever we are allied together decisions are made that serve the interests of Palestinian and Arab rights. I believe we were correct in making our important political-strategic decision to bury the great martyr Khalil al-Wazir in the Syrian capital.

Further on 'Arafat Statement

JN241843 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1744 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Damascus at 1815 today. He was accompanied by Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, member of the Great Al-Fatih Revolution Command in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah; and Salah Khalaf, Fatah Central Committee member. They were received at Damascus International Airport by Comrade Sa'id Hammadi, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command; Muhammad Harbah, minister of interior; Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid, Fatah Central Committee member; Mahmud al-Khalidi, director of the PLO office in Damascus; and 'Abd al-Qadir Urfali, Libyan charge d'affaires in Damascus.

Upon arrival, Yasir 'Arafat, Comrade Sa'id Hammadi, Dr Muhammad Harbah, Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, Salah Khalaf, and the delegations accompanying them went to the martyr's cemetery in the Al-Yarmuk camp. They recited verses from the Koran in memory of the late Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, who was assassinated by Israeli intelligence in Tunis on 16 April. They all then left for Al-Rawdah Palace, where Yasir 'Arafat will reside during his stay in Damascus.

'Arafat made statements to journalists in which he said: I feel I am returning to my dear brothers and comrades-in-arms. We shall march together, God willing, until the flag of our Arab nation is hoisted upon Jerusalem's minarets, churches, and walls. 'Arafat stressed that the blessed uprising is the revolutionary accumulation of our Arab nation and our Palestinian people.

Concluding his statements, 'Arafat said: We will meet in Jerusalem, God willing, to pray together there, God willing.

Al-Asad Meets 'Arafat

JN251528 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1700 today Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman; and Salah Khalaf; Faruq Qaddumi; Salim al-Za'nun; Muhammad Ratib Ghunaym; Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid; Rafiq al- Natshah; and Hani al-Hasan. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Iranian Foreign Minister Arrives on 2-Day Visit

Met by Al-Shar'

LD231833 Tehran IRNA in English 1818 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Damascus, April 23, IRNA—Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati heading a political delegation arrived here Saturday. He was received at the airport by Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq Al-Shar' and other Foreign Ministry officials.

During his visit in Damascus, Velayati will convey a message from Iranian President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i to his Syrian counterpart Hafiz al-Asad. Velayati left Tehran for Damascus earlier today.

Talks With Al-Shar'

LD240712 Tehran IRNA in English 0655 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Damascus, April 24, IRNA—Visiting Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati met with his Syrian counterpart Faruq al-Shar' here Saturday night and discussed the latest developments in the region and the Palestinian uprising.

On the Persian Gulf situation Velayati who arrived here Saturday heading a delegation said after an American ship was struck by a mine, the U.S. staged a massive propaganda accusing Iran of having laid the mine.

The intention was to pave the way for the U.S. aggression. This was how the U.S. Administration justified its attacks on Iranian platforms in the Persian Gulf, he added, and said however, immediate reaction of Iran inflicted substantial damage on the U.S. and was a total shock to it.

On the uprising of Palestinian Muslims in the occupied territories, he said it plays a determining role in developments of the region. Undoubtedly, he continued, the reactionary governments of the region and imperialism would not be pleased with a Palestinian victory.

On Iraqi deployment of chemical weapons against Iran he said that the world has become aware of Iraq's repeated chemical warfare against Iranians and the Iraqi Muslim Kurds. The latest in the chain of Iraqi atrocities is the chemical bombardment of Arab populated Iranian villages in western Iran.

Velayati said that international bodies should look into this unlawful Iraqi practice, adding that so far many countries and international circles have deplored the crimes committed by the Baghdad regime.

Syrian foreign minister said that his country shares common views with the Islamic Republic of Iran and added increased U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf is against the interests of the countries of the region. Syria is sure, Al-Shar' added, that the U.S. is in the Persian Gulf solely for of its own interests.

As for Palestinian uprising he said that it was unexpected for imperialism and stressed that their continued struggle will block the way for compromising courses.

Received by Al-Asad

LD241719 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The Central News Unit reports that Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati met this afternoon with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus and had talks with him lasting 2 hours.

According to the report, our country's minister of foreign affairs conveyed a message from President Khamene'i and stressed Iran's steadfastness and resistance against U.S. aggressions. He also informed the Syrian president of the crimes of the Iraqi regime in making use of chemical weapons.

The Syrian president said: Our evaluation of the Islamic revolution is constant and we praise your stance. We continue standing by the Islamic Republic of Iran against the United States and stress the U.S. defeat in this confrontation. He added: Your steadfastness will assure that the United States will not achieve its goals.

In conclusion, Mr Velayati, while thanking the positive and principled position of Syria, stressed the continuous support of Iran for the Muslim Palestinian people.

Further on Meeting

LD241838 Tehran IRNA in English 1827 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Damascus, April 24, IRNA—Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati met Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad here today.

In the meeting, Velayati reflected on the U.S. military aggression against the Islamic Republic and told the Syrian president, "Over the past two or three years the U.S. has feverishly conspired against Iran and, being defeated each time has resorted to a new plot."

Frustrated at efforts to push through an arms embargo against Iran, the U.S. accused the Islamic Republic of mine-laying and attacked it, "but received a crushing response from Iran's Muslim combatants", he added.

In response the Syrian president said, Damascus' stance towards the Islamic Revolution is unchanging and Syria appreciates Iran's resistance against the U.S. plots. In the meeting Velayati described for Al-Asad the Iraqi deployment of chemical weapons and also said that the Isalmic Republic strongly supports the Muslim Palestinian uprising. The Velayati-Al-Asad meeting lasted two hours.

Holds News Conference

LD250914 Tehran IRNA in English 0859 GMT 25 Apr 88

["Velayati: Reagan Welcome To Try His Luck Again"—IRNA headline]

[Text] Damascus, April 25 (IRNA)—Iran's Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati said here yesterday that Ronald Reagan's intimidations to Iran are inconsistent with the prudent discretion of a president and is evidence of his irresponsible attitude towards the best interests of the Americans.

Dr Velayati who was talking at a press conference at the Iranian Embassy here said if Reagan were capable of identifying the proper course of action in the Persian Gulf he would not have victimized the Americans in the waterway.

Velayati said the U.S. Marines were utterly astounded at the valor of the Iranians in an unequal encounter with the Americans at the Persian Gulf. He said Iranians are quick to fight where and when the occasion arises, and reminded that today the Americans are not any more stronger or capable than they were when they were fighting in Vietnam. Nonetheless, he said, if Washington is under temptation to try its luck in just another military encounter it is welcome 'for a lesson to remember at all time.'

He disclaimed U.S. suggestions of Iran likely to have laid mines at tl.e waterway, and said the accusations are levelled simply as a stratagem to justify Washington's extended involvement in the region for bolstering Iraq's Saddam Husayn..

Dr. Velayati also criticised Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for their unprovoked involvement in the conflict. He said Kuwait allowed the Iraqis to land at the Bubiyan Island at the tip of the Persian Gulf wherefrom to shell Iranian positions off the islands to which, he said, Iran had protested by way of letters to the U.N. and to the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Asked to comment again on the U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 Velayati said that it contains certain positive points, except that it has fallen short of expressly identifying the aggressor party in the conflict, the inclusion of which, he said, would make room for Iraq's punishment.

Velayati also criticized United States for its string-pullings at the United Nations and said Washington had extensively lobbied at the UN earlier this month to block issuance of a resolution which was to condemn Baghdad for its killing of at least 5,000 civilians in Halabjah at an unprovoked chemical warfare on March 18.

He said the United States avows to be extremely concerned about terrorism, whereas in point of fact it is opposed to certain categories of terrorism while it quietly condemns certain other categories. As one recent instance of Washington's connivance at certain brands of terrorism he cited the assassination of PLO man Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] last week and questioned why the United States did not condemn his killing, or the bomb blast in Tripoli on Saturday.

Elsewhere commenting on the current uprisings in the occupied Palestine he said the Palestinians uprisings in the past few weeks has been a sub-climax to their struggle against the Zionists in the past few decades.

Asked whether Iranians will go on pilgrimage to Mecca this summer braving Saudis self-declared code-of-conduct for the Iranians during hajj, he said the Iranians will heed Imam Khomeyni's personal persuasions and will perform their ritual in Mecca irrespective of the restrictions by the Saudis.

Further on News Briefing

JN241848 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1815 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] At 1230 today President Hafiz al-Asad received 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the delegation accompanying him. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the Iranian ambassador in Damascus attended.

They discussed the situation in the region and issues of mutual interest. They also discussed the situation in the Gulf, and particularly the latest U.S. aggression against Iran.

The Iranian foreign minister held a news conference at the Iranian Embassy in Damascus this evening. It was attended by Arab and foreign correspondents. Velayati talked about his visit to Syria and the results of his talks with Syrian officials, foremost among whom is President Hafiz al-Asad. Velayati said he and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' discussed bilateral relations and regional developments. He said the talks were held in an atmosphere of complete understanding.

Referring to U.S. threats to Iran, Velayati affirmed that his country will respond decisively to any U.S. move. He said Iran has sufficient strength to defend itself.

The Iranian foreign minister denied U.S. claims that Iran planted mines in the Gulf. He said such claims are merely a pretext for U.S. intervention in the area and support for the Iraqi regime. Referring to the ending of the Iran-Iraq war Velayati said: Iran's stands are firm and call for punishing the aggressor.

Referring to the war of the cities, Velayati said: We do not support strikes on cities. If the Iraqi regime should try to do that we will respond in kind.

At his news conference, Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati paid tribute to the uprising of the Palestinian Arab people in the occupied territory. He said the uprising is the path of struggle against the Zionist enemy.

Departs 24 Apr

JN242028 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2015 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Damascus—Iranian Foreign Minister Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati left Damascus at 2130 today following a 2-day visit to Syria. He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', the chief of protocol and the chief of the Asia Desk at the Foreign Ministry, the Iranian ambassador in Damascus, and the embassy staff.

Al-Asad Presents Medals to Soviet Cosmonauts

JN241954 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] At 2000 today, President Hafiz al-Asad decorated the cosmonauts with the medal of Hero of the Syrian Arab Republic and the medal of friendship and cooperation. General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and the Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister; Major General 'Ali Malahifji, Air Force commander; and the USSR ambassador in Damascus also attended the ceremony.

President al-Asad decorated Colonel Yuriy Romanenko, commander of the "Mir" orbital complex, with the Hero of the Syrian Arab Republic medal and the medal of friendship and cooperation; Aleksandr Laveykin, engineer of the "Mir" orbital complex, with the Hero of the Syrian Arab Republic medal and the medal of friendship and cooperation; Cosmonaut Aleksandr Aleksandrov, engineer of the "Mir" orbital complex, with the Hero of the Syrian Arab Republic medal and the medal of friendship and cooperation; and General G.S. Titov, official in charge of space at the Soviet Ministry of Defense, with the medal of friendship and cooperation. [all titles as heard]

The president then welcomed the Soviet consmonauts and praised their efforts and achievements. He said: We consider your victories and successes as victories for world peace and peoples' just causes. He also wished them further success in their work and further progress for Syrian-Soviet cooperation in space. The Soviet consmonauts thanked the president for honoring them and for the hospitality and friendship accorded them in Syria.

CP Member Reportedly Dies After Damascus Torture
NC251228 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Citing French sources, which in turn were citing sources close to the Syrian Communist Party, banned in Syria, several Western news agencies have reported that Syrian Communist Party member 'Abd al-Razzaq Abu Zayd died under torture in Damascus last week. The Syrian authorities were interrogating him as the highest ranking official of the Syrian Communist Party Politburo.

Commentary on 'Cradle' of Palestinian Revolution
JN251439 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Arab and world attention now focuses on Damascus against the background of the growing popular uprising against Israeli occupation of the occupied Arab land and the Arab stand on the U.S. proposals presented to the parties to the Mideast conflict popularly known as the Shultz plan. The interest in Damascus and whatever emanates from it legitimately and justifiably stems from Syria's pivotal role in regional developments and its crucial impact on the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Inevitably whatever emanates from Damascus must have a bearing on regional developments. Whatever posture Damascus takes leaves very clear imprints on the present and future course of regional developments.

Western leaders have acknowledged Syria's central role. They have said that there can be no peace in the region without Syria and that any Mideast plans stand no chance unless endorsed by Syria and its president and leader, Hafiz al-Asad. What the enemies and their friends have had to acknowledge has been phrased differently by many Arab strugglers and officials from an Arab standpoint. They have said that if it were not for Syria's steadfastness, there would be no Arab steadfastness, and if it were not for Syria's rejection of plans envisaging Arab capitulation, there would be no strong Arab front standing up against surrender and defeat.

Syria has earned its central role in the region and in the Arab-Israeli conflict against Israel and its protectors and strategic allies, the Americans. It has wedded itself to the occupied Arab land; the inalienable, national rights of the Palestinian Arab people; and the Arabs' rights to liberate their land with all means at their disposal. Syria has also insisted that the Palestinian Arab people fully exercise their national rights and categorically refuse to concede or bargain away Arab land and rights. As a result of such a principled position, Syria has had to take on responsibilities and make sacrifices. Syria has won friends and enemies according to their stand on its policies and principles.

Whoever tends to compromise or capitulate distances himself from Syria, and whoever clings to the land, rights, and dignity and refuses capitulation, surrender, and compromise finds himslef on Syria's side and in its heart. Syria's positions have never changed. Syria has made friends and enemies on the basis of these positions. Syria has befriended or antagonized others in the cause of pan-Arab goals and principled pan-Arab stands.

Syria wants nothing from the Arabs other than a principled, constant, and full adherence to the Arab right to liberate the occupied Arab land, secure the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people, and reject any project or plan that compromises the Arabs' right to their land and self-determination or coerces the Arabs to surrender their national will and sovereignty and to bow to U.S. hegemony and Israeli domination.

Syria's hand has all along been outstretched with love and sincerity to any Arab who wants to wage the pan-Arab, fateful battle against the Israeli enemy and its expansionist projects in the Arab land designed to set up biblical greater Israel and against Israel's strategic allies who have devoted U.S. financial and military efforts to backing Israel and its aggressive policies in the Mideast. The sincere Arab hand is eternally outstretched to all Arab strugglers and all Arab forces that share Syria's stand on the enemy and the Arab nation's pan-Arab goals and pan-Arab commitment to the Palestinian cause, which is the Arab nation's central issue.

As it has always been—the Palestinian revolution's cradle, support, the lung through which it breathes, and its entrenched arena from which it takes off—Syria will remain thus for all time. The common goals of the uprising of our kinfolk in the occupied land against the Zionist enemy and Syria's goals and stands to which it has consistently adhered are testimony to the fact that Syria is for Palestine just as Palestine is for Syria, to

quote the struggler leader President Hafiz al-Asad, the standared bearer of Arab resistance to the Zionist project and the plans of Israel's allies and the leader of Arab struggle to liberate the land from the aggressors and to wrest rights from transitory invaders who will suffer defeat at the hands of their victims just as the invaders of Algeria fared against the Algerian revolution.

Damascus Showing 'Flexible Approach' to PLO
JN241000 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Apr 88 pp 1, 5

[By Lamis K. Andoni in Damascus]

[Text] As talks between Syrian officials and a high-powered delegation from the Palestinian mainstream Fatah movement continued here Saturday, Palestinian sources said that Damascus was demonstrating a "new flexible approach" towards reconciliation between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

According to the same sources the "new Syrian attitude" does not reflect a complete shift in Damascus's basic positions on policies pursued by 'Arafat, but that Syria is now ready to discuss these "differences" without preconditions.

"The Syrians presented their reservations within the context of issues to be included in the agenda of the continuing Palestinian-Syrian discussions and not as preconditions," a Palestinian official, who asked not to be named, told the JORDAN TIMES.

He noted that while Damascus did not hide its displeasure at the continuing contacts between the PLO and Egypt and Palestinian meetings with leftist Israeli groups, Syrian officials did not stipulate that 'Arafat stop these moves as a precondition for reconciliation between Fatah and the Ba'thist government in Syria.

Furthermore, for the first time since 1982, the Syrians are not speaking negatively about the PLO's presence in Lebanon.

"In fact, the Syrian officials spoke positively about the Palestinian presence in Lebanon." The official said, "It seems that Damascus does not believe any more that the PLO presence in Lebanon constitutes a point of contention."

But perhaps the most substantive change in the Syrian approach. According to well-informed Palestinian sources, is that Syria is not reiterating its objections to the PLO's relations with other Arab governments. "Damascus has dropped its insistence that it should have a say over the PLO's relations with other Arab governments," an authoritative source said.

According to this source, during this week's Syrian-Palestinian meetings, Damascus did not demand that PLO stopped its contacts with Egypt.

"According to the Syrians the main concern should be that any contact between the PLO and Cairo should not serve the Camp David policy," the source explained.

Although the Syrian position seems a little vague on this point, senior Palestinian officials interpreted it to mean that Syria would oppose Palestinian-Egyptian coordination but would accept some contacts to continue as long as the PLO "practically adheres to its rejections of the principles of the American-brokered Camp David peace accord between Israel and Egypt and other U.S.-sponsored peace plans," according to other sources.

In theory, the Syrian position falls in line with the stands of left-wing Palestinian factions as well as a number of Fatah Central Committee members. Future Strategies Than Past Differences [subhead]

But despite the importance of the points of differences between the two sides, indications are that both parties are more concerned with discussing their future strategies than past differences.

During the first round of talks Thursday between the Fatah delegation, led by PLO Foreign Department head Faruq Qaddumi and Syrian Vice-President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, the main focus was on means to devlop a joint Syrian- Palestinian stand to foil American moves in the region.

According to a senior PLO official, both sides agreed that the two main urgent objectives should be to sustain the Palestinian uprising and to thwart moves initiated by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz.

The PLO official explained that the two sides were not concerned by the contents of the Shultz peace proposals. But, more significantly, they were alerted by American moves to "block a just settlement which takes into consideration the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people as well as Syria's concerns and role."

The official said one way of translating these concerns into action would be to formulate a joint Syrian-Palestinian stand during the next Arab summit, scheduled to be convened next month.

But despite the prevailing optimism here, PLO officials admit that Syrian-PLO differences, which had accumulated over the past five years, would need time to be ironed out. Strong Positive Signals [subhead]

The officials, however, noted that there have been very stong positive signals over the last week.

Foremost among these signals was of course Syria's approval to bury assassinated PLO deputy military commander Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad) in Damascus last week.

The second signal was Thursday's meeting between the six-member Fatah delegation and Khaddam and discussions about a similar meeting between the same delegation and President al-Asad Sunday.

Moreover, journalists here could not but note that Qaddumi has reassumed work, starting Saturday, at the PLO's Political Department in Damascus for the first time since 1983.

In addition, the leadership of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), which was banned since the convening of the Palestine National Council (PNC) in Algiers in April 1987, has also reopened its offices and indications are that the DFLP return to Damascus is not temporary.

According to Palestinian sources, Kaddam also discussed with Fatah relations with four Syrian-backed factions which boycotted the 1987 PNC. No details were available, but leaders of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), Al-Sa'iqah and the Popular Struggle Front (PSF) are seen every night accepting condolences over Abu Jihad's death, in the same line with his relatives and other PLO officials at the Arab Club in the Al-Yarmuk camp.

Two leaders of Fatah rebels, Abu 'Ali Busaysu and Qadri Kuwayk, have also been at the club every night accepting condolences from thousands of mourners for the man whom the Fatah dissidents had once bitterly fought. 'Arafat-Al-Asad Encounter [subhead]

But the main question that has been raised here this week is whether these moves will be finally crowned by the arrival of 'Arafat.

'Arafat's failure to show up at Abu Jihad's funeral last Wednesday gave rise to diverse speculations. In fact, Palestinian officials themselves were divided whether 'Arafat should have had attended the funeral without guarantees that he would meet President al-Asad.

Leaders of the DFLP, the PFLP, and even some Fatah officials, express the view that 'Arafat's arrival would have dramatically changed the course of Syrian-Palestinian relations; others argued that more arrangements should have been made before such a meeting.

A senior Fatah official argued that 'Arafat did not waste an opportunity and that the door was still open for such a meeting to take place. "We have to remember that 'Arafat was expelled from Damascus in 1983," the official argued. He explained that Palestinian-Syrian reconciliation should be reconstructed on the basis of "equal footing and mutual respect."

Other Palestinian officials told the JORDAN TIMES that 'Arafat feared that a reconciliation with Damascus would hurt his relations with Iraq and Egypt.

Furthermore, they said, there is "a wing" inside Fatah which opposed such a reconciliation.

It is not clear yet to what extent was 'Arafat affected by such pressures, but according to Palestinian officials the PLO chairman has been in constant touch with his aides here to follow up the progress of the talks.

One obstacle cited by some officials is that 'Arafat is said to be asking for an official Syrian invitation. But other officials said this obstacle could be overcome by arranging a meeting in another Arab country. Two options which were widely discussed here had been that Libya's Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi could invite both leaders to Tripoli in the near future or Al-Asad and 'Arafat could meet during the next Arab summit.

But on Saturday, Palestinian sources told the JORDAN TIMES that if Al-Asad received the Fatah delegation Sunday, a third option would be the arrival of 'Arafat this week together with Algerian President Chadli Benjedid, who has played a key mediatory role. Relations on 'New Stage' [subhead]

Meanwhile, optimism prevails and many Palestinian officials believe that Syrian-Palestinian relations have entered a "new stage."

"Both sides are now convinced that there would be no return to the previous rift, and there is just no room for serious differences any more," DFLP leader Nayif Hawatimah told the JORDAN TIMES confidently.

"I can easily say that the Fatah-Syrian dialogue has succeeded in sorting out many of the complicated issues and has led to agreement on the two main crucial issues—the Palestinian uprising and the united Syrian-Palestinian struggle against Israel and American plans."

Hawatimah, like other leaders here, believe that a breakthrough between Fatah and Syria would be followed by a series of talks between a PLO delegation and the Damascus government.

Afghanistan

Government-Soviet Troops Withdraw From Bari Kowt

BK230828 Hong Kong AFP in English 0729 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Islamabad, Apr 23 (AFP)—Some 800 Afghan troops and 12 Soviet advisers have been evacuated after a three year mujahidin siege of their garrison in eastern Afghanistan, resistance sources said here Saturday.

About 200 helicopters, backed up by attack aircraft, Friday evacuated the garrison from Bari Kowt, headquarters of the Afghan Army's 55th Brigade, and then blew up its barracks, tanks, ammunition and vehicles, the sources said. Bari Kowt in Konarha Province was reinforced in 1985 in a bid to check mujahidin guerrillas infiltrating into Afghanistan's eastern provinces.

Muhammad Yunis Khalis, who heads the Hezb-e Eslami group, said the unprecedented evacuation was brought about by mujahidin pressure on the town which would have soon fallen to the rebels.

A communique issued by the seven-party Afghan resistance alliance based in the northwest Pakistani town of Peshawar said mujahidin entered the cantonment later Friday.

The Soviet-Afghan evacuation of Bari Kowt was the third major rebel victory this month, following the capture of Ghorband cantonment in Parwan and Darwazahgey in Zabol Province in the past two weeks, the communique said.

Indiscriminate bombing and shelling of the Bari Kowt area by Soviet-Afghan forces had destroyed dozens of houses, it said, adding that no casualty figures were as yet available.

Soviet Troops 'Evacuated' From Qandahar, Zabol

BK241322 Hong Kong AFP in English 1301 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Islamabad, April 24 (AFP)—Hundreds of Soviet troops have been evacuated by helicopter from two districts of eastern Zabol and southern Qandahar Provinces, resistance sources said here Sunday.

A large number of helicopters Saturday [23 April] evacuated several hundred troops from Atghar District in Zabol Province which had been under mujahidin attack for the last month, the sources said.

The guerrillas then took control of the district, seizing a tank, an artillery piece and three trucks along with some supplies, the sources said, adding that after the evacuation Soviet planes had bombed the area.

Nearly 50 helicopters evacuated Soviet troops from Maruf District in Qandahar Province on Friday, the sources said.

The two districts were now under complete rebel control, the sources said, who reported no casualties.

In a similar operation Friday some 200 helicopters evacuated 800 troops from Bari Kowt garrison in eastern Konarha Province.

An estimated 115,000 Soviet troops are preparing to withdraw from Afghanistan starting on May 15 following the signing in Geneva of a peace accord between Pakistan and Afghanistan on April 14.

The seven-party mujahidin alliance have rejected the accord and vowed to continue fighting until an Islamic government is set up in Kabul.

Najibullah Receives Soviet, U.S. Scholars

LD241444 Kabul BAKHTAR in Pashto 1130 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, 24 Apr (BAKHTAR)—Esteemed Afghan President Najibullah met at Gol Khanah Palace today with Soviet and U.S. scholars who came to Kabul to participate in the conference of scientific and social figures from Afghanistan, the USSR, and the United States.

At the start of the meeting, Sulayman La'eq, head of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Afghanistan, introduced the leaders and members of the Soviet and U.S. delegations. In his conversation, Esteemed Najibullah then expressed his pleasure at meeting with the Soviet and U.S. scholars. He said: I hope this trilateral meeting of ours will be useful. The meeting is more interesting to us since our U.S. friends also are taking part in it, and especially because we are meeting with you at a time when the national reconciliation policy has been declared in our country.

The work of the tripartite conference of scientific and social figures of the Republic of Afghanistan, the United States, and the USSR, which began in Kabul with your participation, was followed with interest by the Afghan people. The conference certainly made it possible for us to thoroughly understand each others' points of view and to explain the present and future situation in Afghanistan.

I have complete confidence that your understanding and knowledge of the present situation in Afghanistan have been made complete during your stay in Kabul. By observing the living conditions of our people, you have realized that they thirst for and demand peace. In this respect, U.S. public opinion delegation's mission in our country is especially valuable as a peaceful mission.

Esteemed Najibullah added: Exchanges of visits among us will be useful when their results help us understand each other and serve to improve and expand relations, not only among our peoples, but among our states, as well. In this way, we will be able to contribute to the cause of establishing peace in the region and throughout the world.

In his conversation, the Afghan president assessed the political situation in the world, the region, and in Afghanistan itself, expressing the need to make an all-round effort to establish peace. Having mentioned the constructive measures taken by the Republic of Afghanistan in the course of declaring the national reconciliation policy, he said: The reason that our meeting today is symbolic is that it has taken place in conditions of [words indistinct] of the political situation surrounding Afghanistan and the signing of the Geneva accords. The signing of these accords proved that we can resolve very great and urgent problems peacefully, through negotiations.

Esteemed Najibullah provided some information on the tasks of the national reconciliation policy, which is aimed at ending war and bloodshed in the country and at creating a coalition government and a multiparty system. He also spoke about the importance of the signing of the Geneva accords for insuring peace in Afghanistan and the region.

Then Robert White, head of the U.S. scholars' delegation, and Primakov, head of the Soviet scholars' delegation, spoke. They welcomed the national reconciliation policy, which was declared in Afghanistan in order to end war and bloodshed.

Najibullah Speech at Workers, Soldiers Awards

LD242052 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Speech by President Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and supreme commander of the Armed Forces, on 24 April at the presentation of the April Revolution and Afghan Star of Heroism medals to heroes of the Republic of Afghanistan and Afghan work heroes; place not given—recorded]

[Text] Dear combatant friends, proud sons of the heroic people of Afghanistan:

Allow me, on behalf of the Republic's leadership, to congratulate you and express appreciation to you, heroes of Afghanistan, for your epic struggle for the independence and freedom of our beloved country, and for your self-sacrificing work in the fields, factories, and educational establishments. You have recorded golden deeds in the history of Afghanistan with your self-sacrificing work and heroic epics.

In the past, the history of amirs, kings, and emperors used to be written down. At present, toilers and epic-creating soldiers make history. Our people, our youth, and our children will always remember your gallantry, boldness, bravery, love, and loyalty to your people and your homeland.

Years and centuries will go by and still the people of Afghanistan will remember your epics. The myth of your gallantry and staedfastness will be passed from father to son, from son to grandson, and from one chest to another chest.

During hard combat tests you have felt the fraternity of the military forces, the warmth of the family life, and loyalty and trust toward your spouses and mothers. You have come to understand more deeply how beautiful this beloved country is, and how lovely its mountains, deserts, cities, and villages are. You understand how to love your beautiful country and how to defend it.

Having presented the stars of heroism to you, I want to mention that this honorary title and the highest commendation of the country is being presented to you for your epics, gallantry, firmness, and your readiness for sacrifice for the honor and pride of Afghanistan's people.

A number of the country's soldiers have sacrificed their dear lives on the path of the people's and homeland's prosperity. Heroic martyrs such as Fayz Muhammad, Amaduddin, Ahmad Shahid, Hafizullah, Malang, Qalamdad, Muhammad Khan, Akhtar Muhammad, Sayyed Habib, [name indistinct], Nazar Gul, Muhammad Naim, Muhammad Hasan, Ghulam Faruq, are among them. They have sacrificed their lives for the sake of establishing peace in the country.

The memory of our comrades who sacrificed their lives for the freedom and welfare of Afghainstan's people will remain in the mind of Afghanistan's people. Honor be to those mothers who raised such heroic defenders of the April Revolution in their arms.

Undoubtedly the sorrow of those mothers who will not see their sons, who have left alone their children, spouses, and elderly fathers, is great. It is our sacred mission to pay constant attention and supervision to the families of the martyrs of the revolution, the heroic sons of our homeland, and to reduce their sorrow, pain, and sadness.

We present to you the highest medal of the country on the eve of the great people's festival—the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution. Your epics, [words indistinct] of the golden belt of the revolution festival will [word indistinct] among all the [word indistinct].

The country has been carrying out reconstruction now for 10 years. Look around you. During these years many changes have occurred. Factories, houses, schools, hospitals, and new mosques have been built. Our people have (?developed). Of course much more work should

have been carried out. However, imperialism and reactionaryism have (?imposed) war on Afghanistan, its people, and on its revolution.

Our state declared the national reconciliation policy to end bloodshed and to establish peace and tranquillity. Its fruits could be seen everywhere. More than at any other time, we now have hope for the establishment of peace and national compromise in our country. The Afghanistan-Pakistan talks in Geneva have successfully ended. This victory is your great victory and the victory of the peace-loving and progressive forces.

We are proud of our friendship with the Soviet Union and its people, who rendered selfless assistance to us. We are proud of the fraternal and combat cooperation of Afghan and Soviet soldiers, which has become as tempered as steel. We are eternally thankful to the internationalist militarists for the memories that they have left in the heroic land of Afghanistan. It is our sacred mission and duty to establish peace and we will do everything to allow national reconciliation to succeed.

Dear heroes, your role in establishing peace in our historic land is great. You have demonstrated heroism. You are the most worthy sons of your heroic people. We congratulate you wholeheartedly on receiving this high state medal. We wish you prosperity, new successes, and endless honors. The homeland is proud of you. The homeland is thankful to you. The homeland is counting on you. [applause]

Hatif Addresses Central Election Commission

LD240938 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0515 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 23, BAKHTAR—The elections process to the National Assembly and participation of the people in the elections is manifestation of the high level of culture of the people of Afghanistan in realization of democracy and Constitution of the country, said Abdurrahim Hatif, chairman of the Central Council of the National Front and chairman of the High Commission for National Reconciliation in the final session of the Central Commission of the Elections to National Assembly held here on Thursday.

"I should point out that people from various strata of our society including peasants, workers, intellectuals, clergymen, national traders, youths and women took active part in the elections", he added.

Hatif said further that for the first time in the history of the country members of the armed forces of the country participated in the elections. The personnel of the armed forces fulfilled their role in the best possible way in securing the peace and participation in the elections.

All party, state and social organizations have done their best and role of the election commissions and participation of influencial personalities in the elections is of great importance.

Out of 229 election stations for the House of Representatives, 54 stations were reserved for the opposition. 18 stations out of 62 elections stations for Senate were devoted to the opposition as well.

In spite of some shortcomings and difficulties which naturally existed in the work of elections, we assess the process of elections as a whole positive and consider it as an important step for realization of the democratic aspiration of our people. Participation of over one and a half million people in the elections is a manifestation of this fact, Hatif noted.

The experience of the elections to the National Assembly showed that our people are tired of war and need peace.

Commentary on 'Successful' Legislative Elections

LD250719 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0436 GMT 25 Apr 88

["Commentary on Successful Conclusion of Elections to National Assembly"—BAKHTAR headline]

[Text] Kabul, April 24, BAKHTAR—Successful conclusion of the elections to the parliament of the Republic of Afghanistan, the highest legislative organ of the country for which 184 representatives and 115 senators have been elected from all over the country is one of the great gains of the policy of national reconciliation and a manifestation of the active participation of the people including peasants, workers, intellectuals, clergymen, private entrepreneurs, national traders, craftsmen, women, as well as youth in the work of the elections. The successful conclusion of the elections shows the increasing confidence of the Afghan people to the state sovereignty.

The final session of the Central Commission for the Elections to the National Assembly of the Republic of Afghanistan confirmed that the elections which is one of the greatest gains of the policy of national reconciliation, as a manifestation of new political thinking elevated the prestige of the state sovereignty.

The conclusion drawn by the final session of the Central Commission for the elections shows clearly that in spite of useless efforts of the extremists who wanted to disturb the process of elections in some areas of the country the election ended successfully with cooperation and participation of the peace-loving people of the country.

Abdurrahim Hatif, chairman of the Central Council of National Front who is also chairman of the Central Commission for Elections to the National Assembly, said that elections were held in a democratic atmosphere

in over 8,666 villages and over one and half million people participated in the elections. (?In twenty) provinces over 200,000 persons from opposition took part in the elections.

Elections were held in the areas controlled by the opposition which certify to the fact that the policy of national reconciliation improved the internal politic (?conditions) and drew the increasing confidence of the people to the state sovereignty.

Among the candidates to the National Assembly were representatives from the National Front, the PDPA, the trade unions, women's organisation, the Democratic Youth Organisation of Afghanistan, the Revolutionary Organisation of the Working People of Afghanistan (ROWPA), Organisation of the Working People of Afghanistan (OWPA), the Islamic Party of the People of Afghanistan and Peasants Justice Party of Afghanistan and individuals as well as nomads which is itself manifestation of the real democracy in the country.

The main aspects as was specified by Najibullah in his speech delivered at the final session of the Central Commission for Elections:

Elections to the National Assembly which is one of the greatest achievements of the national accord (?is) a sign of the increasing confidence of the people to the state sovereignty and support of the people for realization of the policy of national reconciliation, securing peace and building a strong state based on a coalition and multiparty system in the country.

Commentary Sees West Ignoring Geneva Accords

LD250831 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0451 GMT 25 Apr 88

["Commentary on Geneva Accords"—BAKHTAR headline]

[Text] Kabul, April 24, BAKHTAR—One of the documents concluded in Geneva was the bilateral accords between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the principle of mutual relationships especially on non-intervention between the two countries.

Both the contracting parties, Afghanistan and Pakistan, have undertaken solid commitments in respect of the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity, security, the right to the political system of one's liking, avoidance from the use of force or threat, to refrain from direct or indirect interference, overt and covert political and economic sabotage or any other acts for destabilisation, to refrain from organising, training, financing, arming and granting of asylum to subversive groups and their harbouring in camps and bases in their territories. They pledged that they would not enter into any agreements or arrangements with other states designed for the said purposes and would not permit other states to use their territories for these ends.

These commitments constitute the real essence of the Geneva accords which are to be observed by the contracting parties.

However, as the developments in the recent days show, there are certain circles in the Western and imperialist countries which are trying to keep the genuine parts of Geneva accords concealed from the eyes of the people of the world and is considering it merely an agreement on the return of the limited military contingents of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan whereas the essence of these accords lies in non-intervention into the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan, observance of the UN principles, international guarantees and in the final analysis the ensurance of peace in Afghanistan.

The Western mass media are purposely keeping silence regarding the basic elements of Geneva accords and instead making hostile propaganda as if the existing Government of Afghanistan will be toppled down with the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. In this manner, they want to create horror among the people. [third and final BAKHTAR take not received]

Najibullah Visits Prize-Winning Enterprise

LD232153 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Excerpts] The Jangalak firm, which was awarded the People's Friendship medal, has won first place in the nationwide work contest held among the production establishments of the country. The contest was launched to mark the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution. The firm implemented the plan for 1366 [year ending 10 March 1988] in 11 months with a production above the plan valued at more than 28.8 million afghanis.

This morning Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, participated in a gathering of the workers of Jangalak and presented the honorary banner of the nationwide work contest, People's Friendship medals, bravery medals, and letters of commendation in appreciation of the worthy work done by the factory's workers in the 10 years since the April Revolution. [passage omitted]

According to a report by a BIA correspondent, when Esteemed Najibullah arrived at the Jangalak firm, he was welcomed by Eshaq Kawa, minister of mines and industry; Daud Razmyar, secretary of Kabul city party committee; the head of trade unions; and the leadership and the factory's workers. A number of pioneers presented bouquets of flowers. Esteemed Najibullah then paid his respects to the memorial of the martyrs of April Revolution who gave their lives to defend the revolution and the homeland. [passage omitted]

Esteemed Najibullah then took part in a meeting of the workers which was held in the firm's conference hall to mark Jangalak's success in the nationwide work contest.

Esteemed Najibullah delivered a speech at this meeting on the role and importance of Jangalak in the country's economy and the duties of the workers with regard to implementing the national reconciliation policy. Having commended the heroic work and activities of the diligent workers of Jangalak in the 10 years since the April Revolution, he congratulated them on the 10th anniversary of the revolution and the success of Jangalak in the work contest. He added that in a few days time we will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution which is the greatest festival of our people. Ten years is only a short time in history. However, during these years, some works have been carried out that would have previously taken 100 years to complete.

In assessing the traveled path, we can say today that the revolution has brought freedom to the people. The people have been transformed into the owners of their country and their fate. This has been (?written) in words of gold in the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan. The fundamental national and democratic transformation has been realized. The multiparty system has been active and the coalition character of power is expanding. The creative nature of the revolution is being further revealed. We see the mission of our successes in the people's support.

Esteemed Najibullah added that the successes and victories of the revolution would have been noticeably greater if it had not been for the inconvenience caused to us by imperialism and regional reaction. They launched the war of bloodshed against the revolution, against our people. The war brought us many losses, and much sorrow, and sadness. Houses, schools, gardens, and land have been destroyed. The economic damage totals 60 billion afghanis. But how can one evaluate the price of blood, tears, the death of our brothers, and the thousands of maimed and orphan children?

In his address to the workers, Esteemed Najibullah added that great duties and responsibilities lie before us. The economy should improve and many works should be carried out to improve the people's living conditions. It is necessary to carry out a great deal of work to welcome our compatriots who are coming home from emigration. The struggle for peace should be intensified. This demands from all us more activity for a high organization, discipline, and unity. [passage omitted]

According to another report, Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand awarded the competition flag of honor to Spin Ghar construction corporation, which won first place among the construction corporations of the country.

Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand delivered a speech about the importance of work competition for the purpose of strenghtening the economy of the country. He spoke at a reception arranged for this purpose in the corporation. He praised the workers of Spin Ghar construction corporation and said that the patriotic revolutionary forces of the country, especially our country's aware workers, played a meritorious role in the socioeconomic advance and development of the country as well as in standing in defense of the revolution.

It should be recalled that our advancing workers, despite the difficult conditions of being in the trench of defending the revolution, did not forget the front of work and production and strenghtening the economy of the country. The award of the flag of honor to your collective and the award of medals, orders, and letters of gratitude to the best workers and executives among you is in gratitude for your fruitful work. We congratulate you, dear comrades, on this success.

At the end of his speech Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand awarded the advancing and diligent workers medals and orders of the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution for their sacrifice and honesty and similarly letters of gratitude of the PDPA Central Committee and the Central Council of Trade Unions of the Republic of Afghanistan.

The Spin Ghar construction corporation has overfulfilled its work by 30 percent above the plan and the construction work of the corporation has developed 19 percent more than in the previous year.

According to another report, in other meetings arranged for the same purpose in the Kabul housing construction factory, the Ehsanullah Shahid school, and the Afsoir corporation, flags of honor and medals and orders were awarded to the winning firms by Saleh Muhammad Ziray, Haydar Mas'ud, and 'Abdulzohur Razmjo, members of the Politburo, and secretaries of the PDPA Central Committee.

According to another report Major General Muhammad Rafi', minister of defense of the Republic of Afghanistan, awarded the flag of honor of work to the collective of the hospital of the Medical Academy of Sciences, and Major General Nur Muhammad Sarawzawal, first deputy minister for security affairs of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, awarded the flag of honor of work to unit No 1 of the Ministry of Interior Affairs work force.

Chelyabinsk Oblast Delegation Meet Ministers

LD232125 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] A delegation from Chelyabinsk Oblast, headed by [name indisrinct], head of the executive committee of that oblast, met today with Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Hakim in his office.

The delegation also met today with Public Health Minister Sher Bahadur; Training and Education Minister 'Abdulsamad Qayyumi; Light Industry and Foodstuff

Minister Fatih Muhammad Trin; the head of the central council of peasants cooperative; and the deputy head of the State Planning Committee.

During these meetings talks were held on direct cooperation between Kabol Province and Chelyabinsk Oblast and on a number of other subjects of mutual interest.

'Extremist' Arms, Heroin Seized in Lowgar

LD241729 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] A group of extremist elements who intended to disturb the peaceful life of the people of Abchakan, in Lowgar Province, were recently crushed by the country's Armed Forces and their weapons and ammunition were seized.

According to a report by BAKHTAR's military section, as a result of the activities that took place with the help of the region's people, two ZK-1, (?142) rocket launchers, three recoilless guns, 50 surface-to-surface rockets, 1,393 mines of various types, 1,021 kg of explosives, a communications system, 20 dozen [word indistinct], 16 hand grenades, 46 light weapons, and 200 kg of various types of medicine were seized by the country's security forces.

Similarly, some heroin that had been (?smuggled) into the country by these groups to mislead the youths was seized and destroyed.

Bangladesh

Reportage on Opening of New Parliament

Opposition Calls Strike

BK241449 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The inaugural session of the newly-elected Bangladesh parliament opens tomorrow with an address by President Ershad. The new parliament was elected in March amidst total boycott by all the main opposition parties.

An 8-hour countrywide strike has been called by opposition parties tomorrow in protest against its opening.

Weapons, Rallies Banned

BK241624 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The Dhaka metropolitan police commissioner has banned carrying all sorts of arms, explosives, and other harmful and (?explosive) materials around the Sangsad Bhavan [parliament building] from midnight tonight. The ban also applies to holding of rallies, processions, and demonstrations in the area.

Parliament Declared 'Invalid'

BK250338 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] The newly elected Parliament of Bangladesh meets in Dhaka today amid protest by opposition parties, which had boycotted the elections held in March. President Ershad is to address the inaugural session.

Twenty-one opposition parties have given a call for an 8-hour countrywide general strike today. They brought out processions in different parts of the capital yesterday to mobilize support for the strike.

The authorities have tightened the security by deploying about 5,000 police personnel in the city. All parliament members and senior officials have been asked to stay in hostels adjacent to Parliament building to avoid getting stranded.

In a statement, 20 leading intellectuals of the country said the new Parliament is invalid as it does not enjoy the people's confidence. They demanded the setting up of a true representative government and said the struggle will continue till the right to vote is regained.

Police Tighten Security

BK250505 Hong Kong AFP in English 0444 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Dhaka, April 25 (AFP)—Shops and markets were closed here Monday and most traffic stayed off the streets as a half-day strike called by the opposition to protest the installation of a new Parliament got underway.

The strike started several hours ahead of the opening session of the legislature whose members were elected in a controversial poll last month boycotted by most opposition groups.

Police said security was tightened up at Parliament building where President Hussain Mohammad Ershad was scheduled is to address the 300-member House. Security elsewhere in the capital was also stiffened but there were no immediate reports of any violent incidents, a police official said.

Witnesses said shops and markets were closed and the capital's streets empty of traffic apart from a few tricycle rickshaws and goverment buses with police escorts.

There were no immediate reports on the response to the strike call in the major cities of Chittagong and Khulna and other urban areas.

The half-day nationwide stoppage, called by the three main opposition groupings and the right-wing Jamiyat-i Islami Party, was to protest against the Parliament which the opposition asserts was elected through a "voterless, fraudulent and farcical" balloting on March 3.

With most of the opposition boycotting the poll, Mr. Ershad's ruling Jatiya Party won 251 seats.

Strike Disrupts 'Normal Life'

BK250913 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] In Bangladesh, normal life has been disrupted following the 8-hour countrywide strike which began this morning. Twenty-one opposition parties have given the call for the strike to protest the convening of the newly elected parliament today.

Our Dhaka correspondent reports that except for government buses on some select routes and a few cycle rickshaws, all other vehicular traffic is off the road. Shops, markets, and business establishments remained closed as President Ershad is to address the inaugural session of parliament in Dhaka. Journalists have decided to boycott the session.

Ershad Address

BK250900 Hong Kong AFP in English 0849 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Dhaka, April 25 (AFP)—President Hussain Mohammad Ershad opened parliament Monday with a call for a national consensus on his proposal to make Islam a state religion, while an opposition-led half-day strike hit the capital.

"If necessary, a referendum can be called to ascertain the nation's mandate on the issue," he told a tightly-guarded house in a televised address.

Mr Ershad urged parliament to discuss his proposal, first aired on the eve of last month's legislative elections, saying he did not want to impose his own opinion on the issue and preferred to have a national consensus.

He said the proposal was expressed out of personal conviction only. More than 85 percent of Bangladesh's 105 million population are Moslems.

Most major opposition parties and socio-cultural groups have opposed Mr Ershad's idea, describing it as politically-motivated and redundant.

Several minority groups including Hindus and Christians have also criticized the proposal fearing that it could affect their rights.

State-run television said Mr Ershad arrived at the parliament building almost two hours behind schedule to deliver his one-hour address.

Mr Ershad's ruling Jatiya Party won 251 seats in the 300-member house in controversial elections boycotted by the main opposition groups, which have been waging a campaign of strikes and protests to unseat the president.

A half-day nationwide strike called by the opposition to protest the new parliament kept shops and markets closed and most traffic off the streets Monday. The strike started several hours ahead of the opening session.

Police said security was tightened at parliament building and elsewhere in the capital but there were no immediate reports of any violent incidents.

There were no immediate reports on the response to the strike call in the major cities of Chittagong and Khulna and other urban areas.

Government To Install Anantapur Nuclear Plant

BK221312 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] The Bangladesh Government will take necessary steps to install Anantapur nuclear plant. This was stated by Energy and Mineral Resources Minister, A.B.M. Ghulam Mustafa, while addressing the scientists and officials of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission at Sawar near Dhaka yesterday.

He said Bangladesh already entered into the age of atomic power with the commissioning of a nuclear reactor at Sawar Atomic Energy Center last year. The minister inspected the isotopes preparation process at the nuclear reactor of the center.

India

AICC-I Party Holds Meeting Near Madras

Gandhi on Border Issue

BK230934 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The Congress-I president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has accused Pakistan of meddling in Punjab. He said while India continues to seek friendly relations with that country, Pakistan is unfortunately not responding.

Inaugurating the 2-day AICC-I session at Kamrajnagar near Madras this morning, Mr Gandhi said Pakistan is continuing to extend blatant support to terrorists and keep meddling in the internal affairs of India.

He expressed the hope that Pakistan will respond positively to India's moves to improve the mutual relations. He said the home secretary will soon visit Pakistan to hold discussions on various issues with his counterpart.

During his 45-minute speech, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, referred to various external issues and made a special reference to the efforts to improve relations with the neighboring countries.

About Sri Lanka, Mr Gandhi said doors are always open for the LTTE for talks provided they lay down their arms and abide by the India-Sri Lankan agreement. Mr Gandhi said the agreement has strengthened the Non-aligned Movement in South Asia.

Speaking about the economic progress, the country has made in various fields during the last few decades, Mr Gandhi commended the farmers and scientists for achieving self-sufficiency in foodgrains and for building a strong industrial base.

Mr Gandhi accused the opposition of trying to block the development process and indulging in political polemics. He said their quest for narrow gains has weakened our institutions.

Stating that reactionary forces are again trying to raise their heads, he called upon the people to rededicate themselves to the tasks before the country. Mr Rajiv Gandhi stressed the importance of the public sector in achieving economic development of the country. He said that the country is confident of taking its rightful place in the global economy.

In his welcome address, the Tamil Nadu PCC-I [Pradesh, State Congress Committee-I] president, Mr G.K. Moopanar, strongly attacked regionalism and said the party must throw open its doors to all those who will abandon the path of regionalism and join our long march toward self-reliance, economic freedom, and socialism.

Political Resolution Adopted

BK241328 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The Congress-I president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has said that removal of poverty and unemployment will continue to be our basic goal and it should be achieved. It is not utopian, but a practical one.

The call for accepting socialism as a goal was given 43 years ago at the Avadi session of the All India Congress and let us rededicate ourselves at Kamrajnagar to complete the task, Mr Gandhi said. He was delivering his concluding remarks at the AICC-I meet which ended at Kamrajnagar this evening.

In a political resolution adopted today, the AICC-I has criticized the opposition parties for trying to forge opportunistic and unprincipled alliances to grab political power somehow.

The resolution said combinations have appeared in the country from time to time but ended in total failure in delivering goods to the people. Their attitude is based on partisan considerations.

The resolution pledges to defend the country's unity and integrity and fight all antinational, secessionist, and extremist forces.

During the debate on the resolution, Mr Buta Singh [home minister] said Pakistan is not only aiding and abetting terrorism but also engineering the bogey of Khalistan from the Indian soil.

He expressed the government's determination that the innocent people of Punjab will not be allowed to be killed by the agents of Pakistan. Mr Buta Singh said the people of Punjab have now joined against the terrorists and antinational elements. These elements will be crushed with a heavy hand, he emphasized.

About the GNLF [Gurkha National Liberation Front] agitation, Mr Buta Singh said the Center does not want any bifurcation of West Bengal and has helped the state in all possible ways to tackle the situation.

Mr Buta Singh said a deep conspiracy was hatched to destabilize the democratically-elected government at the Center and even the highest office in the country [reference to former president Zail Singh] was involved in it. He said all forces who gang up for political opportunism cut at the very roots of democracy.

Moving the resolution, Mr Darbara Singh warned the forces of destabilization working at the instigation of foreign agents that they will never succeed in their designs.

He urged the government to take firm steps to stop misuse of religious places for antinational activities. Others who spoke on the resolution included Mr Arjun Singh, Mr H.K L. Bhagat, Mr P. Chidambaram, and Mr Vir Bahadur Singh.

Pant on Possible Pakistani 'Military Adventure'

BK221303 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] The defense minister, Mr K.C. Pant, has said that the situation on the country's borders should be watched carefully to face any eventuality. Addressing the biannual Air Force commanders conference in New Delhi today, he said Pakistan, as a beneficiary of Western generosity, may be tempted to feel very strong and engage in some military adventure.

He pointed out that Pakistan continues to fetch large packages of military hardware and technical assistance from the United States as they consider Pakistan a frontline state, in their perception.

On Siachen Issue, PRC Ties

BK221607 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] The defense minister, Mr K.C. Pant, has said that the situation on the country's borders should be watched carefully to face any eventuality. Addressing the biannual Air Force commanders conference in New Delhi

today, he said Pakistan, as a beneficiary of Western generosity may be tempted to feel very strong and engage in some military adventure.

On the Siachen Glacier, Mr Pant regretted the postponement of official-level meetings. He said such factors give mixed signals. Mr Pant said there is evidence of Pakistan's nuclear intentions and capabilities.

He said such evidence confirms that Islamabad has already possessed nuclear weapons or is close to possessing them.

On India's relations with China, the defense minister pointed out that there is likelihood of meetings at higher levels. Mr Pant hoped that the military disengagement in Afghanistan will bring peace and tranquillity there.

Border Troops Return Pakistani Fire in Kashmir

BK241200 Hong Kong AFP in English 1118 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] New Delhi, April 24 (AFP)—Indian and Pakistani border troops have exchanged fire at the frontier of northern Jammu and Kashmir State, but no casualities were reported, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said Sunday.

Pakistani troops opened fire on Indian farmers near the frontier Saturday and Indian troops returned fire, PTI said. Exhanges of fire without casualties are frequent along the northern border.

Pakistani 'Intruder' Killed

BK240756 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] In Punjab, 10 persons, including a terrorist and an intruder from Pakistan, have been killed since last night. Two persons were shot dead by terrorists in the Amritsar District and two others in the Hoshiarpur District.

Three persons were killed in Jullundur, while a woman was shot dead in Gurdaspur District. A terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces near Jagdev Kalan Village in the Amyitsar District.

An intruder from Pakistan was killed by security forces near Thaliwala Village, close to the Indo-Pak border.

Senior Akali Dal Leader Shot Dead in Punjab

BK231604 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Senior Akali Dal-Longowal leader, Mr Sardhon Singh Huda, was shot dead by terrorists at his native village in Amritsar District today. The terrorists also killed his bodyguard Malkiat Singh. This morning terrorists also gunned down two persons at village Lakhan De Pade in Kapurthala District.

Terrorists Kill 16 People in Punjab Violence

BK230753 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] In Punjab, terrorists shot dead 16 people and injured 4 in separate incidents last night. In Amritsar District, eight persons were killed and two injured when terrorists opened indiscriminate fire on a group of farm laborers in a village near Ajnala.

The victims were attacked when they were returning from their place of work. In Jullundur city, terrorists killed seven persons and seriously injured one in the Fantanganj area. In Gurdaspur District a priest was shot dead and another seriously injured inside a gurdwara [Sikh temple] in village (Mallich).

Opposition Walkout in Lok Sabha Over Bofors

BK221614 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] In the Lok Sabha today, the speaker, Mr Bal Ram Jakhar, ruled that he cannot consider any motion on the Bofors issue until the report of the joint parliamentary committee is received.

The issue was raised during zero hour by several opposition members. They drew attention of the speaker to a newspaper report and alleged that the prime minister and the defense minister had misled the house by saying that no agents were involved in the Bofors gun deal.

Not satisfied with the speaker's ruling, almost the entire opposition staged a walkout. The house witnessed noisy scenes for some time as the opposition members waved copies of the newspaper in the house, insisting that their privilege for an adjournment motion on the subject be admitted.

Mr Jakhar observed that he was bound by the rules of the house and members could bring up the issue for discussion once the report of the joint parliamentary committee was received.

The joint parliamentary committee on the Bofors gun deal has adopted the final report. The report will be presented to parliament on the 29th of this month when the term of the committee expires.

Iran

Khamene'i Delivers Friday Prayers Sermons

1st Sermon on Piety

LD221643 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1230 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Friday prayers sermon delivered by President 'Ali Khamene'i at Tehran University 22 April—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [Koranic passage omitted] In these auspicious days, the days of repentance and prayer, I invite all

brothers and sisters, worshippers, to respect the divine instructions and observe piety. The fasting in the month of Ramadan provides an opportunity to practice piety. Seize this opportunity to ask God to help you observe piety in this world, as it becomes an asset for your journey into the next world. Because we are marking the first Friday of the month of Ramadan, I find it necessary to discuss briefly the importance of this month and its issues. In the second sermon, God willing, I will discuss some significant problems created in this region by the enemies of God and the enemies of the Islamic ummah, led by the arch-Satan. It is at this point where the might, courage, and greatness of Islam and the Muslims should be demonstrated.

There are many religious duties and rituals in the month of Ramadan, and the objective behind all of them is to train mankind, to make us perfect, and to help us to come closer to the Islamic goals within ourselves. [passage omitted]

One of the religious duties in the month of Ramadan is holy war for the sake of God. As you know, the apostle of God fought some of his important wars in the month of Ramadan. Some might think: Can anyone fight on an empty stomach in the month of Ramadan? Yes, of course. Thanks to the strong resolve created by hunger and the voluntary dryness of lips from thirst, one can fight much better against the enemies of God for the sake of God.

However, there is a greater holy wqar, that is, holy war against mundane desires, which comes before the smaller holy war. The greater holy war is performed by fasting, prayer, and self-control in the month of Ramadan. Fighting in the battlefield is the smaller holy war; the greater is fighting against our selfish desires, sins, and unlawful deeds. It is at this point where many feet slip and go wrong, and we must beseech Almighty God to assist us. If we were to succeed in the greater holy war, the smaller holy war would be no match for us. You see, our nation, thanks to its respect for God, its devotion, its selflessness along God's path, and its power of overcoming its carnal desires, has succeeded in forcing the greatest world powers to concede helplessness. [chants of "God is great"]

For nearly 10 years this great nation, with its obedience to God, its self-sacrifices, and its devoted and selfless people, has been recognized in the vast arena of global aggressions [as heard] as an independent power that has frightened and worried the major powers. This has come as the result of obeying God's commandment. Otherwise, who in the world can deny that with regard to arms and ammunition, financial reserves, and technology, the arrogant world powers are far ahead of the Third World nations and a nation that has been intentionally kept backward like us? We have been pushed back for 200 years. Who can deny that the United States, the USSR, and some other powers are far more advanced than these nations and these countries, have more modern machines and enjoy greater material power? Everyone knows this. However, at the same time a Third World power, a country that they never even considered could one day oppose them—and other Third World countries never really dream of daring to face the United States—a country like this has for 10 whole years stood in the arena of struggle against global arrogance, led by the filthy and malicious United States and its allies, agents, servants, and puppets, and has inflicted such heavy blows on them—which I will explain in the next sermon—that they have been forced to show signs of their desperation and weakness in the face of the Islamic Revolution. [Chants of "God is great," "Death to America"]

To what do we owe this? To piety. It was the people's piety that brought them up to this level. O people, O Muslim brothers and sisters, you became powerful by being religious, by observing piety, and by obeying divine commandments. Do not think otherwise. [passage omitted]

2nd Sermon on U.S. Attacks

LD221740 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1256 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Friday prayers sermon delivered aby President 'Ali Khamene'i at Tehran University on 22 April—recorded]

[Excerpts] This week's important issue for us, and also for all Third World nations and freedom-seeking governments, is the U.S. savage attack in the Persian Gulf and its side effects. On the sidelines and under the protection of this joint plot, the Ba'thist, 'Aflaqi regime of Iraq found the opportunity to make a move and, to a point, shed the disgrace it suffered at the hands of the Islamic fighters. However, as I will explain, it was in vain.

Incidentally, that period coincided with the anniversary of the Tabas incident. In a few days, that is next Sunday, it will be the anniversary of the day when in the year 1358, or 1359 [1979-80 or 1980-81], the U.S. regime attacked Tabas and in disgrace it was forced to take delivery of the roasted and charred bodies of its servicemen from the Tabas desert and the Islamic Republic. It was disgraced.

At the beginning of my speech I state that the Iranian nation should know and deem it certain that although this time this U.S. invasion had a different outcome, what the United States will ultimately gain from its recent dastardly action in the Persian Gulf will be precisely what it achieved in Tabas. [chants]

The question should be asked: Why did the U.S. regime take this big gamble? It was really a big gamble for them. The best thing for a regime like the U.S. regime is to preserve its might and power, without creating doubt among world nations, and even among the U.S. nation itself, about its real power. This is beneficial for it. To take risks, to gamble, and to embark on a really stupid move, such as that in the Persian Gulf, arises from

factors and characteristics which, when we view and analyze them, show that this situation was imposed on the United States. It was a miscalculation, but the United States had no choice except to rely on this miscalculation and embark on that action. I will now explain.

The Halabjah issue and the victory of the Islamic fighters had much more effect on secret political organizations in the world and on world political leaders than on the Iranian people. Of course, the world and the public did not want the matter made public. Then when the issue of chemical bombardment arose, they published it extensively, but the victory of the Islamic fighters was covered up. The world did not learn what happened in Halabjah, what the Islamic fighters did, and what this great victory means. However, the politicians understood. Propaganda is for public opinion. The political circles understood well what had happened in Halabjah and what "Val-Fajr-10" and the victory in that vast area and the disgraceful defeat of the enemy meant. This frightened them a great deal. And so it should.

They equipped an army for 7 years; they gave every facility possible to a country like Iraq; they gave the most modern tanks to the Iraqi Army, or to Iraq's friends—which would most likely be given to Iraq—such as these modern tanks which Egypt recently bought from the United States. Well, it is obvious that Egypt does not want to use these tanks against Israel. The United States would not give modern tanks to Egypt to fight Israel. Then who are they for? It seems certain that even if such equipment is given to other countries, the main objective is to crush Islam and the Islamic Republic. Then it should go to Saddam, to an army with so much equipment, from East and West, with all the help, with all that propaganda and morale-raising, fighting for 7.5 years against the forces of Islam which are the exact opposite as far as receiving equipment from the world is concerned. That is, all the various types of weapons we have obtained from the world, from weapons manufacturing centers, we have done through our own means. We have made a lot of it at home, and some we have captured from the enemy. The world has not given us a plane, a tank, or a warship in the 7 years of war. This is no joke. We bought modern tanks from the British Government, from the previous government, and we paid for them. They did not give us the tanks. Iran bought helicopters from the Italian Government and paid for them. They did not give us the helicopters. Our helicopter was sent for repairs. They kept it. The spare parts for our aircraft stayed in U.S. warehouses. We insisted, but they did not give them to us. You see how the world behaves toward this Army and how it behaves toward the enemy's aggressor regime. For 7 years the two armies have confronted each other: one of them equipped from these resources and further equipped daily; whereas to the other they will not deliver even what it has rightfully paid for, what belongs to it, things for which it has paid, let alone give it anything new.

After 7 years under these conditions, suddenly the world, that is the political circles of the world, sees that this very same army to which they have given no weapons, that has received no help from any quarter, in a surprise attack crosses the highest mountains in the region, takes the enemy by surprise, inflicts a severe blow on the enemy, captures 1,000 km of its territory, captures thousands of its personnel, captures thousands of units of its transport and armored facilities, and captures its artillery units. The artillery units which our brothers captured in Halabjah were in mint condition; they had just been taken out of their coverings; they were newly conditioned and at the disposal of those forces, and they were captured by our forces. Such an unexpected, extensive, and profound blow to the Iraqi Army suddenly woke the world from its slumber.

Saddam's allies were shaken. What does it mean? What kind of divine and powerful force is this? What kind of power is this? What kind of revolution, what kind of leader, what kind of people are these that enter the battlefield against world powers, united as they are against them? Western analysts wrote in their newspapers and magazines: It would seem that the fate of the Iran-Iraq war is going to be determined on the western fronts. [chants] In other words, everyone in the world felt that this western issue and the crushing blow inflicted on Saddam and his Army not negligible matters. And Saddam's Army could not recapture an inch of the territories which our fighters captured in 3-4 days. As you know, there were constant clashes on the two sides on the "Val-Fajr-10" fronts, in Halabjah, in (Shaq-Shemran) to the north of the front, constant clashes in the north and south. They kept attacking and struggling without being able to advance an inch. This shook the world.

Of course, some people in the world, mainly the United States, sensed great danger. The United States has felt for several years that this nation and this revolution are not inclined toward compromise despite its arrogance, its bullying, its dominance-seeking, its show of force. There is no other power under the sun that says to the United States: By what right do you bully people, pushing them around, and interfering in the affairs of the world? No one else. Even the other superpower, the Soviet Union, has no disagreements with the United States in this connection. It is taken for granted that the big powers can interfere in world affairs, that they should take charge of nations' destinies, that they should remove and install governments, weaken them or strengthen them. Everyone accepts this. There is one power on earth, one country and one nation that has stood up and said: No, you do not have this right. [chants]

Because of the strong anti-arrogance characteristics and nature of this revolution and this nation, the United States has been extremely frightened of this nation's victory, particularly a military victory. This has been so since the beginning of the war. The U.S. fear intensified following the Halabjah issue. For several years the Americans have been saying that the war has no victor, that

there is no military conquest in this war. Now they see a military conquest close at hand; they see the Islamic fighters are advancing rapidly. So, they planned to block this advance.

The first point all informed individuals athink about concerning the American presence in the Gulf is that it entered the Persian Gulf to defend Iraq. It saw that the Iraqi regime and Army lacked the power, capability, and competence to assume the initiative by themselves. So, the United States was forced to roll up its sleeves and enter the arena to help Iraq. Of course, the Iraqis also took advantage of the opportunity and made advances in Al-Faw.

However, I must say briefly that those who celebrated the outcome in Al-Faw did so too soon. Our fighters will show that those who celebrated and sent congratulatory notes on the Iraqi advances in the war, under the U.S. aegis and supported by the U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf, and those who called the corrupt 'Aflaqi Saddam the one protected by God, will all repent on account of our fighters' decisive blows and the resistance of our nation. They will repent their rejoicing and realize they jumped to conclusions too soon as they witness the ultimate fate, a fate that belongs to the pious and indeed to this nation. [chants]

God willing, the future will show that victory belongs to Islam. Moreover, the nation that has risen up to oppose the union of the West, East, the regional reactionaries, the United States, and Europe; the nation that has succeeded in enduring for 7 years all the blows it has received and yet deals harder blows on the enemy; the nation that has introduced the Islamic Republic to the world as a stabilized and established regime is still alive. Its fighters are still on the scene, and its willpower and decisiveness still retain their power. [chants]

God willing, our nation will witness such a state of affairs and so will those nations who are interested in our problems. The shamed and wretched reactionaries of the region who are U.S. stooges will also understand this fact, as will the arrogant United States. We rely on God and are certain that such a fate awaits us. I shall no longer describe the details and programs related to it. What is certain is this fact; there is no doubt about it.

As for the problem which the United States triggered in the Persian Gulf, I must definitely mention several implications here. One issue is that in U.S. propaganda a great deal of effort was made to legitimize this U.S. move. Indeed, the U.S. regime needs such legitimization. The U.S. regime is in dire need of legitimizing its foolish act in the Persian Gulf, an act which has led to its own loss and from which it will endure greater losses. The U.S. regime needs to justify this act for its own nation. Of course, like many other nations of the world the U.S. nation is interested in a show of force and strength; there is no doubt on this point. Any nation likes to see its government do something courageous and strong. However, like all other nations of the world, the U.S. nation will not be happy with the irresponsibility of its administration and officials. This is the same nation that organized demonstrations during the Vietnam war: It brought so much pressure on the U.S. Administration that was forced to withdraw, to lose face by its disgraceful defeat in Vietnam after sending a force of 500,000 to Vietnam. The United States is the same one after all. Most certainly the United States will not endure headaches and trouble because of the foolishness of Reagan and his cronies, or their mismanagement which has to some extent electioneering value for them and also some value for their objectives as an arrogant power.

And yet it is the beginning. Now the United States has entered the arena. If it receives consecutive blows, where will it stop to put an end to this? It will be forced to go on. The day it receives a blow, the U.S. people expect even more from its administration in responding blow for blow. Thus, it will drag the United States into a long-term war. Will the U.S. nation be content with such a thing? Most certainly not. The U.S. nation will certainly be unhappy with any dangerous escapade into which their administration may drag them in a dangerous long-term affair, destroying their youth and property. The U.S. nation knows that these foolish moves in the Persian Gulf will lead to this. So in an effort to forestall the possibility of protest by the American public, the Reagan regime is trying to portray the affair as legitimate. He wants to portray it as if he made the right move in attacking our oil platform. He says that we went over there, they had planted a mine, and, as our frigate hit the mine and was about to be sunk, we were within our rights to attack the platforms. Is this a logical statement? No, this is not logical.

Even if we presume that the mine was one that Iran had planted—and the issue is still unclear and suspicious, and there is the possibility that the Americans planted it—it is possible that it is one of the mines that the Iraqi regime threw into the water and was carried by the waters of the Persian Gulf. We have repeatedly seen ourselves that mines float close to the islands in the Persian Gulf, mines which we have seen and destroyed. This is a very strong possibilities, it is probable. How can you be sure that Iran has planted these mines? All right; let us accept the premise that the Iranian forces planted these mines. What is the answer?

In the first place, to encounter a mine in a region to which you have come illegally does not mean that you can call anyone to account. If there is anyone that should be reprimanded it is you yourself. Well, why did you come to the Persian Gulf? What is the United States doing in the Persian Gulf? What are your combat force and naval fleet doing in the Persian Gulf in such huge numbers? Does not the Persian Gulf have an owner? Go and parade your warships, in large numbers, as much as you want in the gulfs and waters around your own country. What are you doing on this side of the world in

the Persian Gulf in any case? What do you want here? Why are you meddling? They are like the thief who tore his trousers and jacket on entering a house because he had come across some barbed wire or other obstacles and then complained: Since my suit got torn from your barbed wire, I must be hit you on the head. Serves you right for entering a house without permission and tearing your suit. Why do you enter the Persian Gulf where there are mines, where there is danger, and where your fleet may be hit, or damaged, or sunk? The basis of your entry into and presence in the Persian Gulf is illogical, and the U.S. nation will not accept this.

In the U.S. press also some alert individuals within U.S. society are coming round to believe that the United States and the U.S. Administration resemble those thugs [chaqu-keshha] and tough guys [baba-shamalha] who do not recognize or accept any law anywhere, and that they look like this in the arenas of the world. They are right! Why do you want to be present everywhere in the world like thugs and tough guys, talking loudly to make your point? Well, to accept such risks means there are certain consequences; you should not have entered. You did, and this is what happened. Now, what is the response to this? Is the response to attack oil platforms? Oil platforms are a nonmilitary site. Who is on an oil platform? Even if there are military forces there, then these would be very few and would be there to carry out basic tasks. Otherwise, oil platforms are not a military site. There are people who deal with oil there, and there is no logic and reason to attack oil platforms.

Moreover, I say that the United States and U.S. military forces here used very ugly methods. If their nation becomes aware of this, then the idea that this move was logical would be totally negated. So, the U.S. regime is lying to its nation. And the U.S. mass media lie to mislead U.S. public opinion when they say that they the right to go there. They had no right whatsoever, and they should not have embarked on this illogical move. This is the first aspect of the affair.

The second aspect is that the U.S. move in this illogical and idiotic deed was dishonorable. There are two types of war; there are two types of grudge; there are two types of aggression. One type is dishonorable and filthy so that even those who accept the principle of the operation would not accept this type of move. The United States has committed a crime here: It did not fight. Some of the forces there on the platforms were injured when the enemy's naval ships, helicopters, and aircraft fired on them. The helicopters of our Navy and our naval vessels went to rescue them, but the U.S. forces prevented them. Instead they caused the the martyrdom of a number of these platforms' personnel. To prevent help from reaching the wounded is a great crime. How can the United States justify this crime to world public opinion? There is a war going on, very well then, in a war one military force fights another military force, and even in the arena of war the wounded should be evacuated; corpses must be evacuated. The United States did not allow our injured to be evacuated in this episode. This was criminal.

Another criminal act was that when the frigates became engaged in a clash, when several of the personnel of one of our frigates were injured and placed on a boat to bring them ashore, U.S. helicopters and planes fired at the injured personnel in the boat. This is a crime.

It is a crime for us, but nothing new for the United States. We have seen great crimes committed by the United States. We saw U.S. crimes in this country for more than 30 years. Every day under the annihilated Pahlavi regime the United States committed a great crime against this nation, apart from the other crimes it was committing elsewhere. So this is nothing new to us. The killing of 1 person, or 10, 100, 1,000 or 1 million people is not important for the U.S. regime. However, world public opinion should know that they are lying if they claim that they told the personnel of the oil platforms to get out of the way because they want to fire at the oil platform. An oil platform has no life, but what you did was to fire at human beings and also at those who were wounded, and you prevented the wounded from receiving help. So that is the second aspect about which world public opinion should know. I claim before world public opinion and U.S. public opinion that Reagan and his gang and the troops that came and committed this act in the Persian Gulf committed a crime, and their name should be recorded on the list of world criminals. [chants]

The next issue is what should be the reaction of the Iranian nation to such an event? What sort of reaction is expected by the U.S. regime, the sort they usually get from Third World nations, the same sort of silence, fear, and retreat which allows for further aggression? You have come to the Persian Gulf, you have directly intervened in Iran-Iraq war, you have enabled enemy forces to make a little progress, you have attacked our oil platforms, and you have started the war of seas in the Persian Gulf. How does our nation view this?

First of all, regarding the statement attributed to U.S. officials to the effect that from their viewpoint the war is over in the Persian Gulf—that is what they said, they came and did something stupid, committed a crime and of course received a strong response at the same time, and now they are saying from their viewpoint the matter is closed—let me say that no, the issue is not closed. We must find out why the United States feels justified in commiting such mischief in this region. This is the issue. The Iranian nation is a revolutionary nation, and the U.S. evaluation of our nation and revolution is quite wrong. We are not the sort to be bullied. We are the sort of people who, when faced with a bully and find that he will not stop with reasonable persuasion, concentrate our efforts on toppling him from such a position, and we will do this. [chants]

The U.S. action in the Persian Gulf has made our nation's hatred for the United States boil over. Some 24 years ago our dear imam said during the early part of the

struggle in one of his speeches in Qom: The U.S. President should realize that today nobody in the world is more hated by the Iranian nation than he is. I repeat the same statement by the imam today. The U.S. President and ruling clique should understand that today no one is more hated and uglier than they are in the eyes of our revolutionary, combatant, and warrior nation. This action has intensified our nation's hatred, a holy and justified hatred for the United States. It has increased the gap and made the United States more ugly and disgusting in the eyes of the revolutionary nations of the world. It has also showed that the American superpower, despite all its bragging, has limitations, and that a revolutionary nation can oppose it.

During the incident, the United States damaged two of our frigates and two of our platforms. Our warriors, responding rapidly and without wasting time, hit an oil platform run by Americans, a U.S. logistics vessel, a British vessel, and a U.S. war helicopter. [chants] Our frigate had been hit, it was on fire as a result of a missile and was listing badly, and still one of our Navy personnel was manning his gun firing at U.S. planes and helicopters in a very dangerous situation. Our warriors' action, their rapid response, their brave and decisive reaction have become a subject of discussion in the world today. It has been a news item in the last few days. They say that the rapid and brave response of the warriors of the Islamic Republic is amazing. Truly it is amazing. This is only part of the matter. Our nation is brave enough to take on oppressive powers when they try to be bullies.

The aim of international oppression in this action was to save Saddam. This is only wishful thinking. The warriors of Islam, as they have always stated, as we promised the nation and people of the world, will bring the 'Aflaqi aggressor regime of Saddam to its knees with our blows and force it out of the scene. [chants] So this desire of the United States and oppressive regimes will not be realized, and the United States has placed itself in a dangerous position by this action. Our nation will fight, resist, and pull down the United States and its allies from the position of bullies and will not allow such bullying to continue against such a revolutionary nation.

Following my recommendations of the first sermon, a point should be raised for your benefit, dear brothers and sisters. Assume holy piety and rely on the Lord. This power that I am boasting about, this power of the nation, is the power of the Lord. Yes, our nation has this power, and the United States is far too small to be able to force our nation to retreat. Never mind Iraq and the reactionaries. The United States and its allies are far too small in the face of such holy power. Bear in mind however, that it is the power of the Lord. [passage omitted]

Velayati-Led Delegation Leaves for Damascus

LD231047 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Mr Velayati, minister of foreign affairs, left Tehran for Damascus before noon today at the head of a political delegation. He will hold talks with high-ranking Syrian officials on bilateral relations, important regional and international issues, recent developments in the Persian Gulf, and cooperation between the two countries.

Returns From Syria, Comments

NC250535 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Velayati, who headed a political delegation to Syria, returned to Tehran this morning. After his arrival he spoke with our correspondent about topics discussed with Syrian officials. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] What agreements were the two countries able to reach?

[Velayati] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. This visit was of special importance in view of the sensitivity of the present period. The Islamic and popular activities in Lebanon and Palestine in recent months were definitely among the major topics discussed, and both sides had and continue to hold similar positions on supporting these struggles. Our contacts and coordination will, God willing, continue in the future, as well.

[Correspondent] The Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria have always been concerned with issues involving Palestine and with events in Lebanon. What, in general, were the Syrian officials' views on these issues?

[Velayati] Time has proved the correctness of the two countries' views, particularly of Palestine. In other words, both countries oppose any type of compromise on the Palestinian issue. They oppose politicking by some factions and countries aimed at achieving a compromise over the Palestinian issue. The final answer was ultimately given by the Palestinians with their uprising. We have seen recently that a number of dignitaries, parties, officials, and countries in the region have had to take the Palestinian people into consideration and adjust their positions. Every day it becomes more clear that only force and struggle will restore the lost rights of the Palestinian people. Every day we see how the Palestinian people are achieving more and more of their holy objectives.

[Correspondent] What were the Syrian officials' views on the U.S. military aggressions against our country's oil platforms and on the recent problems in Lebanon?

[Velayati] The Syrians condemned the U.S. military aggression against the oil platforms and stated that, as in the past, Syria continues to stand beside the Islamic Republic of Iran, opposing any type of aggression. As for the problems that have arisen recently in Lebanon, they shared our view that any type of conflict among the strugglers and fighters in Lebanon benefits the Zionist

enemy and that the Muslims and strugglers in Lebanon and the region should close their ranks, avoid internal conflict, and turn all their guns against Zionism and its mentors.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. [end recording]

Further Comments on Visit

LD251111 Tehran IRNA in English 1004 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati wound up a two-day visit to Damascus and returned home Sunday night after talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Speaking upon return he said that his talks with President al-Asad centered on Tehran-Damascus relations and their role in shaping regional politics.

Both Iran and Syria, he added share a joint stance and support the Islamic movement in Lebanon and occupied Palestine. The Palestinians he added, have no other alternative but to continue their armed struggle.

As for Lebanon he said both Iran and Syria believe that any schism serves the Zionist interests and that all guns must be pointed at the Zionist regime.

On the outcome of his visit he said Syrian officials condemned U.S. aggression against Iran and pledged their support for Iran against any aggression.

Velayati Interviewed on U.S. 'Interference'

LD241005 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0740 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Interview with Foreign Minister Velayati by unidentified announcer on the "Holy Defense" program; date, place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] Dear listeners, we are in the presence of Mr Velayati, the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign minister. After expressing my gratitude, let me ask him to speak about the Islamic Republic of Iran's viewpoint regarding the recent U.S. interference and its support for the aggressor Ba'thist regime.

[Velayati] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. U.S. interference in the region is not a new. Since the Islamic revolution, the U.S. Administration has persistently tried in every way possible,to place obstacles in the way of the revolution's progress so that the Islamic Republic of Iran would be defeated. Sometimes it would do this with its own internal agents and with the support of affiliated groups. Later it did this by encouraging the Iraqi regime and through its unstinting support for that country. In fact, it forced or encouraged the Iraqi Government to commit aggression.

Over the years American support for the Iraqi regime and for its aggression against us has continued through direct and indirect means. The fact that American agents in the region give financial aid to the Iraqi regime in order to fully equip that regime against the Islamic Republic is certainly in accordance with U.S. wishes; it has clearly been based on American advice. U.S. satellite information regarding the two sides' military situation and necessary military information is being placed at the disposal of the Iraqi regime, a great help to that regime in its aggression against the Islamic Republic.

What the United States did in recent days was in line with its usual policy. Of course, the survival of a government can not depend forever on the support of a foreign country. The Iraqi regime does not have a base among the Iraqi people. The United States and others, and even the Soviet Union and some other Western countries, are supporting that regime with all their strength and are trying to prevent its downfall.

What happened in Halabjah was in fact a great warning bell for Iraq's supporters. In fact, the Iraqi regime designed the (?tragedy) you witnessed in order to boost the morale of Iraqi forces. The timing of the U.S. aggression against our oil platforms and the operations in Al-Faw was not a coincidence, but is (?understandable). The United States has never hidden the fact that it supports the Iraqi Government and that government's survival. However, its recent actions have overtly interfered on the side of the Iraqi regime, a different approach from previous times. This snows several things, one of which is the weakness of the Iraqi regime.

Of course, the United States will not always, as they have said, be able to continue this unstinting support for the Iraqi regime. We have seen many examples of this in various places throughout the world. The United States with all its might or any other regime for that matter that has wanted to support a puppet regime to keep it in power has not always succeeded.

This Persian Gulf region is one in which the United States has openly interfered for a long time and it believes it has a right to bring in American forces and have a permanent presence here. This is, as I have said, something that cannot continue forever. The security of this region is the responsibility of this region's countries. That country that is physically present in the region and has an adjacent coast, logistical facilities, and strategic [word indistinct] will stay, and the country that has come here from another hemisphere—although it may at first seem as if it is performing apparently powerful maneuvers—does not have roots here and will not be able to confront the people of the region forever.

What is undeniable, despite the opinion of governments, including some regional governments, is that the region's people are not pleased about foreign fleets in the Persian Gulf, resorting to extortion and trying to assert their

dominance. Some of the region's governments, Arab and non-Arab governments, have even explicitly opposed the presence of U.S. forces [words indistinct] in the region.

The aim of the Islamic Republic of Iran, whether on the military or political front, is to decisively confront this issue, the aggressive American presence in a region that does not belong to it. This has always been and will be our intention. We have stood up in defense of our own interests in the region. Iran has the longest coastline in the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman. It has a several thousand year-old right in this region. The region belongs to this region's people. It belongs to Iran and other Persian Gulf littoral countries. It is only natural that we should hold firm for the fulfillment of our rights, and we are holding firm.

The world has more or less understood this. The very brave action of our forces in the face of the recent U.S. aggression has, at the very least, shown the world that Iranians are not willing to accept, at any price, this kind of onslaught and attack. Some of our forces, whether in the Navy of the Armed Forces or in the IRGC's Navy, performed a great task in the recent clashes. Even the world's mass media and Western political circles could not refrain from expressing amazement over this fact. What this clash shows, at the very least, is that Iranians confront these things with high morale and are determined to stand against any aggression even when the aggression is committed directly by the United States.

Khamene'i on Reagan's Threat, Baghdad Meeting

LD251056 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] The Supreme War Support Council held a session today in the presence of Mr Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, chairman of the Supreme Defense Council. The latest developments regarding the imposed war were discussed at this meeting.

In an interview with our correspondent at the end of the meeting, Mr Khamene'i called on Iranian youths to prepare to be sent to the fronts to fight against the enemies of the Islamic revolution in a most extensive way.

Regarding the recent threats of U.S. President Reagan, the chairman of the Supreme Defense Council said: The Iranian people ignore such threats; they are nothing more than an election ploy.

Concerning the holding of a peace conference in Baghdad, the chairman of the Supreme Defense Council said: We ask those who would take part in that conference whether a regime that is aggressive can also be peace-loving.

Majlis Speaker Condemns Tripoli Bombing

LD241630 Tehran IRNA in English 1624 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA—Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani Sunday strongly deplored yesterday's bomb explosion in a market in the Lebanese city of Tripoli and also assassination of PLO official Abu Jihad.

Speaking in the open session of the Majlis he described the Saturday explosion in Tripoli as a dastardly crime and said it showed the animosity of Zionism and world blasphemy with revolutionary Muslims. It is surprising that the world circles and Western media on the one hand condemn terrorism and on the other overlook these incidents.

He said that Zionist hands are seen behind these crimes, and commented that the Zionists promote terrorism because it serves their own goals but when they encounter revolutionary resistance they condemn it because it harms their vested interests.

Majlis Speaker on Possible Use of Toxic Gas

LD240814 Tehran IRNA in English 0801 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Rome, April 24, IRNA—The spokesman for the Supreme Defence Council Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani emphasized that where and when necessary the Islamic Republic of Iran will be capable of equipping all its forces with chemical weapons.

In an interview in Tehran with the correspondent of the Rome-based daily LA STAMPA Saturday Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed hope that Iran would never be compelled to deploy such weapons.

Asked why Iran insists on continuing the war despite Islam's exhortations for forgiving enemies Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that Iran would have forgiven Saddam if it were in the interest of the two nations of Iran and Iraq.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani reminded that an agreement with Saddam Husayn will not entail a permanent peace and by way of analogy said that if the allies had entered into a peace accord with the Nazi forces in the second world war a third world war might have already erupted.

The Iranian Majlis speaker objected suggestions by LA STAMPA's correspondent that Iran in its own right had violated international conventions by its occupation of the U.S. Embassy in Iran and said that the United States granted asylum to the criminal shah after he fled Iran in the wake of the Islamic revolution, which made Iranians angry with the United States and compelled them to occupy the U.S. den of spies.

Asked if Iran would agree to formation of an international arbitration for settling the conflict, he said Iran is for a just and dignifying settlement of the conflict and would sincerely consider any sound suggestion for an arbitration.

Tehran Notes Threat Against U.S. Hostages

LD241718 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The Revolutionary Justice Organization issued a threat stating: If the United States carries out a new aggression in the Persian Gulf against Iran, that organization will execute its American hostages. According to AFP, this statement, which was written in Arabic, was placed at the disposal of the office of a Western news agency in Beirut today.

Israel Said To Participate in U.S. Operations

NC230648 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain has announced that foreign military personnel, including Israelis, participated in the U.S. forces' operations against Iranian economic installations in the Persian Gulf. According to this report, foreign personnel in military uniform and gear arrived on Bahraini soil early last week. Bahraini officers report that some of them spoke Arabic with an Egyptian accent. The report adds that in Bahraini ruling circles it is being said that these military personnel are Israelis and that they are there (?disguised as) Egyptian military personnel to (?conduct liaison) and communicate with Bahraini military officers.

The Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain stresses the Israeli identity of the foreigners, adding: This group arrived in Bahrain at 2330 on Saturday via two C-141 airplanes belonging to the U.S. Air Force and then went to the (?three) military bases of Jafayr, West Rifa', and [name indistinct]. The announcement states that in Jafayr military base alone there are 55 officers and soldiers stationed. Citing knowledgeable sources, the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain said the arrival of these forces coincided with U.S. plans to inflict blows on the Islamic forces to support the Saddam regime and the reactionaries of the region. This points to the collusion of these forces in the clash with Islamic forces.

Mahallati Assails UN Silence on Toxic Gas Use

LD241806 Tehran IRNA in English 1734 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Washington, April 24, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran Saturday called on the U.N. to send a probe team to Iran for filing a report on Iraq's renewed use of chemicals.

Iranian Ambassador to the U.N. Mohammad Ja'far Mahallati discussed Iraq's growing use of chemicals and U.S. attack on Iranian oil rigs last week with U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and several Security Council members Saturday.

In the meeting Mahallati said that while the world awaits the U.N. team's report on the Iraqi regime's savage chemical bombardment of Halabjah and its high casualty toll, Baghdad has resumed dropping chemical bombs on Iranian villages. Baghdad seems to have two major objectives in mind, he said, overshadowing the U.N. report on the Halabjah genocide and sabotaging the secretary general's effort for finding a comprehensive solution to the Iraqi-imposed war.

Mahallati continued, the silence of the Security Council towards Iraqi crimes, which is the obvious result of U.S. lobbying at the Council, has given Baghdad rulers carte blanche to pursue their criminal goals.

Iran, he made it clear, foresaw the consequences of Iraq's recurring war crimes and the trampling of international laws and accordingly warned the UN secretary general in advance but the unwarranted silence of the Security Council has encouraged the Ba'thist regime to expand its mischiefs.

Mahallati called on Perez de Cuellar to fulfill his responsibilities and those of the Security Council towards the Iraqi crimes.

The Iranian ambassador also reflected on the critical Persian Gulf situation in the wake of the U.S. attack on Iranian oil platforms and told Perez de Cuellar that the mere expression of concern is not enough to correct things and the UN should take concrete steps to punish these aggressions and prevent their repetition.

In response Perez de Cuellar expressed deep concern that the Iraqi regime's misdeeds may directly affect his efforts to end the war.

The secretary general added that last week's U.S. attack violates Article Five of Resolution 598 and expressed hope that the U.S. would seriously refrain from similar acts.

Official Warns of Possible Hajj Boycott

LD231651 Tehran IRNA in English 1640 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA—If the regime ruling Hijaz [Saudi Arabia] prevents 150,000 Iranian pilgrims from coming to Mecca and staging "antipathy towards unbelievers" and unity rallies, no Iranian Muslim will perform this year's hajj pilgrimage, of course if Imam Khomeyni permits, warned a senior hajj official here Saturday.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Emami-Jamarani, the imam's representative to the Hajj and Endowment Organization, told a press conference here that it will be one hundred percent detrimental to the Riyadh regime's interest if Iranian Muslims do not participate in this year's hajj pilgrimage.

He also described as a "lame pretext" the Hijaz regime's demands for limiting the Iranian pilgrims' number to only 45,000 and pleas against holding of "antipathy towards unbelievers" and "Islamic unity" rallies in Mecca and Al-Madinah respectively.

The Hijaz regime would gladly welcome even 200,000 Iranian pilgrims if it makes sure that they (pilgrims) will not stage politico-religious rallies in the two holy cities to awaken the Muslim ummah's conscience, he said.

The official, who was recently in Riyadh to make preliminary arrangements for Iranian pilgrims, said that it is incumbent upon all Muslims to bring up their political and social issues during the hajj pilgrimage.

He noted that declaring antipathy towards and seeking deliverance from unbelievers is the very essence proof of the great socio-politico-religious event of hajj, while the Saudi regime denies this. The Wahhabi clique ruling Hijaz has no right to comment on Islam or interpret Islamic issues as they or their masters (global arrogance) wish, he added.

The holy city of Mecca is the best place for all Muslims to seek justice, raise up their consciousness, discuss their common objectives and chant slogans against the hegemonist infidels terrorizing Muslims worldwide, said Emami- Jamarani.

The head of the Hajj and Endowment Organization also cautioned the Muslim world against the Riyadh regime's attempts to destroy all Islamic shrines in order to make further room for the U.S. and other infidels.

Comment on Riyadh Talks

LD231856 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] An interview with the supervisor of the Hajj and Endowment Organization concerning the recent visit to Hijaz [Saudi Arabia] by an Iranian delegation and negotiations on the forthcoming hajj ceremonies are the topics of the news commentary in today's program. In an interview granted to correspondents, Mehdi Emami-Jamarani reported on the recent visit of the Iranian delegation to Hijaz and the meetings held on the upcoming hajj ceremonies, as well as a statement issued by the Al Sa'ud regime following the departure of the Iranian delegation. He said: Discussions between the Iranian delegation and the Saudi delegation, headed by the minister of pilgrimage affairs of the Hijaz regime, lasted 4 hours. During these discussions the Saudi delegation raised a number of issues that had nothing to do with Islam. It was the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran that outlined Islam's positions regarding the issues raised.

He added: The Saudi delegation claimed that the hajj does not have a political aspect and that disavowal of the pagans was only appropriate for the time of the holy prophet, blessings be upon him and all his descendants, during the grand pilgrimage. They said disavowal of infidels has no meaning in our time as there are no such infidels in Mecca. They also complained about the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, and Iraq being described as infidels and said the Iranian pilgrims began fights during the hajj ceremonies. They also said Saudi troops were not even armed during the bloody calamity last year.

He said: These were their claims. In response we stated that the political aspects of the hajj are very clear in the Koran and in the opinion of the imams and ulema. The holy Koran has even given priority to the political aspects of the hajj, and the imams have invited Muslims to participate in the hajj in order to raise social problems so that they would not become the subjects of corrupt and oppressive political and social systems.

In addition, last year during the congress on sanctity and safety of shrines, 200 of the great ulema of the Islamic lands declared that the political dimension is an indivisible part of hajj. He added: The claim by the Al Sa'ud regime that disavowal of the infidels is part of the great pilgrimage and no longer has any meaning is based on the views and policies of oppression and the Wahhabis. Therefore, they are trying to keep Muslims out of the political scene within their countries. The only time we can consider the issue of disavowal of infidels null and void is when we become friends of the infidels. This is contrary to direct Islamic tenets. The Saudis also said that there are no infidels in Mecca to disavow. We responded that there may not have been any infidels in Mecca even at the time of the prophet, blessings be upon him. However, the order for the disavowal was given.

Second, the prophet ordered the disavowal of infidels whose influence on Muslims causes corruption within society. Is there no influence by infidels in Mecca right now? Why cannot pilgrims say "Death to the United States, Israel, and the USSR," who hold all the interests of Muslims in their oppressive hands and are using Muslims' wealth against them? Why cannot 2 million pilgrims declare the disavowal of Israel in the interest of innocent Palestine? Whoever is innocent should cry out. The best place to cry out against oppression is Mecca.

Referring to the bloody calamity last year, Mehdi Emam-Jamarani said: The Saudi regime shamelessly stated that their soldiers were not even armed during the Mecca incident and were acting in response to fighting started by the Iranian pilgrims. We replied that any fighting between the faithful during the hajj is banned. However,

is it not possible to have battles between the faithful and the infidels? Is it possible to remain silent in the face of the infidels or should we assume the most adverse attitude toward the infidels?

He added: The Saudi delegation asked us to forget last year's bloody calamity because it is a cause of animosity between the two nations. We said that such a calamity cannot be forgotten and is the cause of animosity between the Al Sa'ud regime and the revolutionary people of Iran, but not with the people of Hijaz who have had their fill of Saudi oppression.

He continued, saying: Regarding the attendance of 45,000 Iranian pilgrims this year, we said this is an excuse to stop Iranian pilgrims from going to Mecca. If we declare today that we will go on pilgrimage on the basis of the Saudi regime's wishes, then the Saudis should even accept 200,000 pilgrims.

Therefore, either the Al Sa'ud regime is capable of looking after the holy shrines and will accept the 150,000 pilgrims or it is not capable, in which case the ulema who enjoy the trust of the Muslim nations must undertake the management of these holy shrines which belong to all Muslims.

In conclusion, Emami-Jamarani warned the Muslims of the world to stop the activities of the Al Sa'ud regime regarding the destruction of shrines and historical and Islamic buildings and invited the great Islamic ulema and Muslims of the world who are going on pilgrimage to object and to raise the issue of the innocence of the Iranians in last year's bloody calamity. They should point out the attempts by the Saudi regime to stop participation in this year's hajj by the revolutionary Iranian people and should ask why the Americans have security in Mecca and why elements like the corrupt Saddam are welcomed there but Muslims are not secure in such a place?

IRGC Frogmen Recover Parts of U.S. Helicopter

LD231647 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The IRGC's Central Headquarters issued a statement announcing: Marine patrol units and frogmen of the IRGC's naval unit, after a 5-day search, have discovered pieces of a Cobra helicopter belonging to the aggressor U.S. armed forces and taken them from the Persian Gulf to the shores of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Cobra helicopter belonging to the aggressor American armed forces was shot down during the heroic battle of the IRGC's gun boats last Tuesday and it crashed into the waters of the Persian Gulf.

REUTER Cited on Attack on Saudi Tanker

LD241731 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1600 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Quoting shipping sources in the region, REUTER reported: An oil tanker belonging to the Saudi regime and registered in Liberia was today attacked by speedboats in the Persian Gulf. According to this report, the 37,000-tonne "Sea Trader" was sailing toward Hijaz through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iraqi Claim of Civilian Shelling Refuted

LD231758 Tehran IRNA in English 1739 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA—A spokesman for the War Information Headquarters (WIH) categorically refuted Iraqi allegations that Iranian artillery shelled civilian areas of Al-Sulaymaniyah and Darband-i Khan in northeastern Iraq.

The WIH spokesman said, the world has witnessed during the different stages of the so-called war of cities that Iran's operations were only of a defensive nature and in response to the enemy's crimes. "The fact that each time it was the Iraqi regime which initated attacks on Iranian civilians areas is crystal clear," he added.

Fallacy of Baghdad's allegations concerning Iran's attack on housing quarters of Al-Sulaymaniyah and Darband-i Khan is at least clearly obvious for the people of these two Iraqi towns, he said.

The spokesman said the Ba'thist regime resorts to such "baseless and totally false claims" whenever it intends to resume its satanic acts on civilians.

Combat Operations in War With Iraq Continue

U.S. Planes Pursued

LD221744 Tehran IRNA in English 1700 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 22, IRNA—Iranian planes repelled American warplanes in Sirri and Abu Musa Islands in the Persian Gulf at 11:35 hours local time (08:05 GMT) yesterday, said a military communique here Friday.

The 3180th Joint Staff communique said that Iran's gunboats patrolled the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman yesterday, protecting Iranian islands and oil platforms. They also repelled two Iraqi Mirages from the airspace of Abu Musa Island at 11:07 and 12:10 hours (07:37 and 08:40 GMT) Thursday.

Exchange of artillery and mortar fire between Iranian combatants and Iraqi troops continued throughout the war fronts Thursday with the former holding the upper hand.

Iraqi forces sustained heavy losses in men and equipment in parts of the southern and western sectors in artillery duels with Iranian Gendarmerie forces yesterday.

Iraqi Planes Violate Airspace

LD231719 Tehran IRNA in English 1655 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA—Iraqi warplanes violated air spaces of Orumiyeh, Mahabad, Mahshahr and Khorramabad today, but were forced to flee when faced by the anti-aircraft fire of the Muslim forces. The intruding planes broke the sound barrier at a high altitude while escaping Iran's air space.

Communique No 3,181

LD231727 Tehran IRNA in English 1658 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters heavily bombed the headquarters of Iraq's 3d Corps in northwest Al-Sulaymaniyah Province northeastern Iraq, Saturday, inflicting substantial casualties and losses on the enemy, said a military communique here today.

The 3181st Joint Staff communique said that all fighters returned safely to bases after successfully carrying out the bombing mission which took place at 13:30 hours local time (10:00 GMT).

Iraqi forces suffered heavy losses in men and equipment throughout the battlefields in artillery duels with Iran's Muslim combatants Friday.

Iranian Gendarmerie forces heavily shelled Iraqi positions in parts of the southern and western fronts Friday, killing and wounding a number of enemy soldiers and destroying several gun emplacements, a munitions dump and a communication pylon.

Exchange of artillery and mortar fire continued all over the fronts yesterday ragin somewhat more heavily in Chazabeh, Talaiyeh and Zayd, southern sector, where Iraqi troops incurred several casualties and losses.

Iranian artillery fire checked Iraqi engineering operations in Kharratha and enemy logistical activities in Helaleh, Chazabeh and in some northwestern supply routes Friday, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy.

Heavy fire of Iran's Muslim combatants silenced fire of Iraqi tank squadrons in Sumar, Nahr 'Anbar and Panjwin, western and northwestern sectors, yesterday, damaging a number of enemy tanks.

In the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's Navy gunboats in addition to checking movement of an Iraqi vessel around Al-'Amayah oil platforms, closely monitored activities of some foreign warships in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, concluded the communique.

Kurds Kill 30 Iraqi Troops

LD231730 Tehran IRNA in English 1700 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA—Peshmergas of Iraq's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) killed more than 30 Iraqi troops and wounded several others when they attacked a Ba'thist military convoy only a kilometre from the city of Kirkuk over the past few days.

According to Ramadan Headquarters of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) irregulars, the peshmergas destroyed four Iraqi military vehicles and seized intact five others and also some light weaponry and communication sets in the course of their operations.

Iraqis Shell Abadan

LD231746 Tehran IRNA in English 1730 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Abadan, Khuzestan Prov., April 23, IRNA—At least 10 civilians were injured, one seriously, as the aggressor Iraqi regime continued to shell residential areas of Abadan, Khuzestan Province, Saturday. Two children aged 4 and 6 years are among the injured. Some five houses and a school were also damaged in the shelling.

Iraqi Troops in Mehran Bombed

LD241050 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] According to a report from the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, brave and self-sacrificing Iranian Air Force pilots in their fighters heavily bombed enemy troops and armored equipment concentration points in the Mehran sector at 1118, 1120, and 1122 today. After inflicting heavy losses and casualties on the Zionist enemy, our pilots all returned safely to base.

Communique No 3,182

LD241749 Tehran IRNA in English 1743 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA—Iran's Air Force heavily bombarded Iraqi troop-concentration sites and equipment in Mehran and Al-Faw operational regions at 07:48, 07:50, 07:52 and 08:36 GMT Sunday.

The 3182nd communique of the Joint Staff Command announcing the above today, said all fighter-bombers returned safely to the bases after inflicting substantial damage and casualties on the enemy forces.

The communique said, Air Force planes also carried out patrol flights over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman yesterday in support of the Navy for reconnoitering positions of foreign vessels. Ignoring a provocative warning from a foreign ship, they reconnoitered a total of 16 vessels, it added.

On the battlefields exchange of sporadic tank, artillery and mortar fire raged throughout the war fronts yesterday, it said.

Combatants of the Army ground forces checked and suppressed activities of the enemy forces, by despatching patrol units and setting up watch-posts Saturday.

It said Iran's Muslim combatants subjected Iraqi positions, fortificatons and supply axis to their heavy fire, killing and wounding several Iraqi troops. Some bunkers and gun-emplacements of the enemy forces were also demolished, it added.

In the western fronts, Iranian armoured units silenced Iraqi tank fire in Helaleh, Panjwin, Maymak and Qasr-e Shirin yesterday, inflicting damage and casualties on Iraqi tanks and crew, said the communique.

Iran's Gendarmerie forces killed and wounded some Iraqi soldiers setting afire some bunkers and gun-emplacements of theirs. Movement of Iraqi troops and vehicles was also brought to a halt, concluded the communique.

Pakistan

Noorani Desires 'Good Relations' With USSR

BK221624 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 22 R 88

[Text] The minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr Zain Noorani, has expressed the desire of maintaining good relations with the Soviet Union. He was speaking at a reception in his honor in Karachi this evening by the Sind Muslim League.

He said it is necessary that Pakistan fulfill its obligations in the Geneva accord so that the Soviet Union could not get any excuse to back out and refuse to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan.

He hoped that in the wake of Geneva agreement, peace would be restored in Afghanistan and an Islamic government would be set up there.

Mr Zain Noorani said it has been mentioned in the accord that signatories would not get themselves involved in any terrorist activities. The reception was also addressed by the general secretary of the Pakistan Muslim League, Sind Zone, Alhaj Haminuddin; speaker of the Sind Assembly, Syed Muzaffar Hussain Shah; and Senator Mazhar Ali. They lauded the efforts of the government as well as Mr Zain Noorani in reaching the accord at Geneva.

Minister on Ojri Camp Report, Afghan Refugees

BK241650 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The report of the technical committee set up on the 10th of this month to inquire into the Ojri camp blast has been presented to Prime Minister Mohammad Junejo today.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Qazi Abdul Majid Abid told newsmen in Islamabad today that the cabinet subcommittee will start examining the technical committee's report tomorrow.

It is expected to take about a week to review the report. He said a detailed and objective review will be made on this report. He said the guilty will not be protected nor objective realities ignored.

Referring to the relief and rehabilitation work now in progress, the information minister said it has been carried out on an emergency footing. The government machinery is busy with this task night and day and no effort is being spared in the rehabilitation of the affected people.

Referring to the Geneva accord, the federal minister said the accord reflects the broad consensus the prime minister, Mohammad Khan Junejo, obtained from political leaders before its signing.

He further said Pakistan will not coerce the Afghanistan refugees to return immediately, nor will it prevent them from returning. Pakistan will fully participate in the rehabilitation work of these refugees in their country with the cooperation of international organizations.

National Assembly Session Ends 24 Apr

BK241630 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Excerpts] The National Assembly was prorogued today after completing discussion on the president's address to parliament made on the seventh of this month. The house adopted a motion expressing gratitude to the president for his address. [passage omitted]

Earlier 13 members took part in the discussion. They welcomed the president's remarks about Islamization process. They called for strengthening democratic traditions in the country.

They were critical of the law and order situation, corruption and unemployment and emphasized the importance of accountability at every level. They called for an independent foreign policy and asked the government to remain vigilant in view of India's hostile attitude, particularly the utterances of the Indian prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi. [passage omitted]

Sri Lanka

Sinhalese 'Extremists' Attack Air Force Base

10 Reported Killed

BK230440 Hong Kong AFP in English 0436 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Colombo, April 23 (AFP)—Ten people were killed when Sinhalese extremists attacked Sri Lanka's main Air Force base near here overnight, security sources said Saturday.

An unknown number of Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP—People's Liberation Front) fighters raided the air base at Katunayake late Friday, killing four Air Force personnel, the sources said.

Air Force and police reinforcements repulsed the attack, killing six extremists and capturing 12 others, five of whom were wounded. A number of attackers escaped with some arms and ammunition.

Liberation Front Blamed

BK230820 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 0657 GMT 23 Apr 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Apr 23 (LANKA PUWATH)—Six members [words indistinct] force base at Katunayake late last evening, official sources told LANKA PUWATH. The sources said that four Sri Lankan Air Force personnel had also been killed as they fought the southern terrorists. One Air Force person has been reported missing.

Official sources said a large gang of southern terrorists had staged the attack on a sub armoury on the north east wing of the Air Force base. Twenty eight Chinese T56 rifles and one 1 OK BMA machine gun had been robbed by the terrorists who had loaded the weapons onto a Mitsubishi canter (half truck) and later transferred them to a white coloured Rosa van which carried number plates bearing the serial number 33 SRI 5284.

Official sources said this vehicle was later signalled to halt at a police check point at Kochikkade about eight kilometres north west of the Air Force base as some of the terrorists were making their getaway along with the robbed arms.

The terrorists had opened fire at the police wounding four policemen. Some JVP'ers, too, were believed wounded in the retaliatory police fire. But, the terrorists had managed to escape.

The Colombo international airport was closed to traffic for a short while, but re-opened later last night.

Official sources said a tight security operation was now in force in southern Sri Lanka to prevent any further attempts at violence by the JVP.

Yesterday's attack was the second on the Katunayake Air Force Base by a hit squad of the proscribed Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) which is carrying on a campaign of terrorism in southern Sri Lanka. The first attack was early last June 8.

JVP terrorists (?were) also reported to have exploded a bomb and assaulted two employees of an overseas telecommunication's store close to the air base, at Kadirana and driven off in a Pajeiro jeep, along with communications equipment.

Official sources told LANKA PUWATH that the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Sri Lanka police were now investigating the JVP attacks.

Security Minister Comments

BK230904 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] In Sri Lanka, at least six members of the Janata Vimukthi Peramuna [JVP] and four Air Force personnel were killed in an exchange of fire during an attack on the country's main Air Force base near Colombo International Airport last evening.

The national security minister, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, told our Colombo correspondent, Plabon Majumder, that the attackers who belonged to the outlawed JVP escaped with the largest haul of automatic weapons.

An official spokesman told our correspondent that 12 JVP members have been captured, of them five were critically wounded. Official sources did not specify where exactly the two explosions took place, but reports say that these occurred in the operation room of the base.

The sources do not rule out the possible connivance of a few insiders within the Air Force base who might have helped the raiding party. The van in which the raiders escaped has since been intercepted and a manhunt launched to track down the assailants.

Police Officer Killed by Subversives 23 Apr

BK241049 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 1005 GMT 24 Apr 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 24 Apr (LANKA PUWATH)—Police Sergeant Punchi Banda attached to the counter subversive unit [CSU] of the Ratnapura police station, was shot at and stabbed to death yesterday when he was traveling in a bus.

Official sources told LANKA PUWATH that a placard claiming JVP [Janata Vimukthi Peramuna] responsibility for the killing was found by the side of his body.

At Walasmulla, the watcher of the District Development Council [DDC] was trussed up and one Sinhala typewriter, one adding machine, and a roneo machine had been robbed by unidentified persons, yesterday.

Meanwhile, a report from Akuressa states that a United Socialist Alliance candidate for the forthcoming elections was shot at and seriously wounded by southern terrorists [word indistinct] at Maliduwa last Friday [22 April].

Another report from Ratnapura states that a bomb exploded at the United National Party [UNP] office yesterday. Damage to the building is estimated at 10,000 rupees.

LTTE Political Leader Captured by IPKF

BK250724 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 0652 GMT 25 Apr 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 25 Apr (LANKA PUWATH)—Three LTTE terrorists were killed yesterday, when the IPKF counter attacked a gang of terrorists who opened fire at an IPKF partol at Thunnukai in Sri Lanka's northern district of Vavuniya, official sources told LANKA PUWATH.

They said two bodies of the dead terrorists were found by the side of a tank. The IPKF also recovered 2 AK-47 rifles and one M-16. In a separate search operation in Vavuniya, the Indian troops recovered 2 T-56 rifles and 6 T-56 magazines.

A report from Jaffna states that Vijayan, LTTE's political leader of Velvettiturai, the native place of LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, was apprehended along with 10 other LTTE cadres by the IPKF.

The Indian troops also seized a bag containing 15 audio visual cassettes of Velupillai Prabhakaran's speeches on terrorism and one pistol.